UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

A STUDY OF WITCHCRAFT IN ENGLAND, 1640-1660

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF ARTS
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

MARGARET KRZYZANSKA

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

© JUNE 1992

National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-77767-2

Canada

A STUDY OF WITCHCRAFT IN ENGLAND, 1640-1660

BY

MARGARET KRZYZANSKA

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

© 1992

Permission has been granted to the LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA to lend or sell copies of this thesis, to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film, and UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS to publish an abstract of this thesis.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

Abstract

Historians argue that witch trials in England were completely different from witch trials on the Continent. In England, the years of Civil Wars and Commonwealth were marked by tremendous economic, religious and political upheaval and a rise in accusations of witchcraft which reached exceptional proportions in terms of size indicating that between 1640 and 1660, witch trials in England had more in common with Continental persecutions than previous English witch trials. All women who were accused of witchcraft had one feature in common; they were unruly. Some were perceived as threatening because they were economically almost self-reliant while still others participated in new religious and political roles that were usually the preserve of men.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION 1
Subject
Sources
Endnotes

1. THE HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF WITCHCRAFT IN WESTERN EUROPE 9
Preconditions of the Witch-Hunt
The Dynamics and Some Explanations of Witch Prosecutions
The Decline of Witch Trials
Conclusion
Endnotes

2. WITCHCRAFT AND ECONOMY 52
The Witch's Accusers
Some Economic Explanations of Witch-Hunts
The Victims of Witch-Hunts
Conclusion
Endnotes

3. WITCHCRAFT AND RELIGION 86
Some Evidence of the Impact of Religion on Witchcraft
Religious Views Held by Witch Persecutors
Religious Inclinations of Those Accused of Witchcraft
Conclusion
Endnotes

4. WITCHCRAFT AND POLITICS 116
A Few Examples of Witch Trials Involving Politics
Political Views of Persecutors
Political Views of Those Accused of Witchcraft
Conclusion
Endnotes

CONCLUSION 143

BIBLIOGRAPHY 146

INTRODUCTION

Subject

The subject of this thesis is witchcraft in England during the Civil War and Interregnum period, 1640-1660. The Civil War period was fraught with tremendous social upheaval, economic crisis and political and religious uncertainty. At the national level the parliamentarian party went to war against the King, after bitter struggle the supporters of the Parliament won, executed the King and established a republic. Those who had triumphed over the King then attempted to impose their own values on the rest of the society. But that was no simple matter because there had arisen, according to Christopher Hill, a second revolution within the revolution which threatened the authority of the Parliamentary party. This second revolution came from the grassroots level.[1]

The revolt of the lower-classes which persevered during these years was of a

political, religious and economic nature. Politically, groups such as the Diggers, Fifth Monarchists and Levellers proposed sweeping reforms within society such as, for example, political democracy, equality before the law, and even the establishment of a communist society. Proponents of these ideas posed a serious threat to the regime. They drew up petitions and organized marches and demonstrations.[2] They joined various religious sects such as the Baptists, Quakers, or Ranters which surfaced during the civil war period and which threatened the Established Church with their anti-clericalism and heretical ideas about religion. Economically, the rapid demographic expansion, the steep rise in the prices of foodstuffs and sharp decline in wages resulted in greater polarization between the wealthier and poorer members of society.[3] The decline in the populace's standard of living led to popular protest in the form of enclosure and fen riots.

Lower-class women, in particular, became unruly during the Civil War and Commonwealth period. During this revolutionary time they assumed many and various public roles, both peaceful and violent, that were usually the preserve of men. Throngs of women petitioned the Parliament on issues that were of an economic, religious and political nature. They helped with the war by constructing fortifications, carrying ammunition, raising funds, serving as spies and sometimes disguised in men's attire even fought in the war as soldiers. The rise of civil war radical religious sects offered to women new roles in religion. Women became prophetesses, preachers, and also wrote pamphlets arguing about controversial religious issues. Women, too,

participated in enclosure riots. This type of behaviour on the part of women was perceived as threatening to the patriarchal order, family and gender relations.

It was at this time of ferment that numerically speaking the "greatest slaughter of witches" in English history took place. Within a two year period two hundred women were executed for witchcraft. That is a large number if we remember that altogether less than 1000 persons were executed for witchcraft in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to J. Sharpe, in comparison to other felonies which consisted overwhelmingly of property offenses, homicide and infanticide witchcraft indictments did not play a large role. For example, in Essex between 1620 and 1680, witchcraft indictments made up less than 4 percent of other felonies tried at the assize courts.[4] But this percentage figure is misleading because in point of fact it is not an accurate measure of all witchcraft cases, at best it represents only the cases which got to court. Suspicions of witchcraft were much more numerous than the court records suggest, according to Alan Macfarlane "...approximately one in three of those believing themselves to be bewitched went as far as making a formal charge in courts, registered as an indictment."[5] In England, there are two clearly distinguishable phases of witch persecutions. The first took place in the last two decades of Elizabeth's reign after which the trials abated only to be revived with much greater zeal and intensity during the 1640's and 1650's, when two witch-hunts resembled more closely the Continental rather than previous English witch trials. It is our intension to study in this thesis the relations between

the economic, religious and political agitation of this period and the persecution of witches.

Sources

The primary sources upon which this thesis is based consist of printed records, pamphlets, literary tracts, newsbooks and ballads. All these sources are biased in that we learn about witchcraft and witches only from its enemies and all contain religious or political bias usually from a puritan or parliamentarian perspective. Following is a short description of the kinds of information the different kinds of sources provide.

The official records consist of court records of the Assizes available in print in two works edited by C. L'Estrange Ewen, Witchcraft and Demonianism and Witch Hunting and Witch Trials.[6] The Assizes were a centrally organized court system with itinerant judges following pre-arranged circuits and holding session at various sites. Normally such sessions occurred twice a year. "At the start of the Assize a calendar of prisoners in the gaol was read out; often this included the name of imprisoned persons accused of witchcraft. Presentments from the Quarter Sessions and elsewhere were then examined by the Grand Jury, mainly chosen from the minor gentry. The presentment was either dismissed as "ignoramus" or passed as a "true bill," in which case it became an indictment....The first indictment was then read and

the named accused called to the Bar. The prisoner was asked if he pleaded guilty or not guilty, and the next was summoned. Those who confessed were put on one side until the time of judgement. The Petty Jurors were then called by the Sheriff, their names read, and the prisoners given a chance to challenge them. A group of middling yeomen and artisans, it was they who decided the guilt or innocence of the accused. Witnesses against the accused were then publicly called for, and examinations of the accused taken before the Justices of the Peace were read to the jury, if they were evidence for the crown. The accused could call witnesses but not on oath unless the crime was a felony. When the group of prisoners was large enough, the jury retired with a list of prisoners 'for their better direction and help of their memory to know who they have in charge.' Finally, they returned and gave their verdict of guilty or not guilty, whereupon the judge passed sentence."[7] In the way of actual testimony the Assize records have little to offer. On the other hand they offer information regarding the sex, age, marital status and occupation of the accused. The records of the Assize provide a comprehensive view of the frequency of indictments of witchcraft because even though witches were also tried at the quarter session courts, borough courts, and ecclesiastical courts, increasingly at this time the trial of witchcraft became the prerogative of this court.[8]

The most revealing and valuable type of sources used in this study are the pamphlets. We have collected nearly all the pamphlets about witchcraft that are extant from the 1640 to 1660 period. Of the twenty-six pamphlets relating to

witchcraft in this period mentioned in the bibliography of Montague Summers we were able to obtain all but five. A large number of books, tracts and pamphlets of this period have been collected by a London bookseller, George Thomason, who collected almost everything that was in print since 1640.[9]

Pamphlets may be used to support some of the evidence in legal records. More importantly than that they provide additional information not found in the court records about those involved in witch accusations, at times giving detailed accounts of witch's personality, social standing and beliefs. Often they provide a fuller account of the actual incident which resulted in witchcraft accusation, the motives ascribed to witches, the witch's confession and insight into the reasons why witches were prosecuted. Some pamphlets contain such information as the depositions brought to court against the witch by her neighbours, the full proceedings of a trial and a detailed character portrait of the witch. Other pamphlets speak of witchcraft in general terms offering reasons why witches deserved to die.

The other type of sources, literary tracts, newsbooks and ballads provide revealing insights of the prejudices of contemporary observers regarding witchcraft. We found fourteen tracts relating to witchcraft most of which fall within the 1640 to 1660 period. Most authors believed that witches should be persecuted, although some, as Thomas Ady, for example, were against the persecutions. They also provide information regarding the laws and methods of prosecution and detection. The

literary tracts also furnish additional information regarding actual witchcraft incidents and reasons why witches were or should be persecuted. The newsbooks usually refer to witchcraft in a general manner. However, sometimes they confirm cases of witchcraft already described in a pamphlet and offer still another interpretation of the same incident. The last type of source are ballads. These have been gathered from the work of Hyder E. Rollins entitled Cavalier and Puritan which is a collection of "Ballads and Broadsides Illustrating the Period of the Great Rebellion 1640-1660".[10] Although only two in number, the ballads too are useful sources of information supporting pamphlet or newspaper accounts of cases. More importantly, ballads according to Rollins, "...throw a flood of light on the attitude of the common people...".[11]

Endnotes

1.Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down. Radical Ideas During the English Revolution (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1972), 13-18.

2.David Underdown, Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985, 231-2.

3.Keith Wrightson and David Levine, Poverty and Piety in an English Village, Terling, 1525-1700 (New York: Academic Press, 1979, 1-7.

4.J. Sharpe, Crime In Early Modern England 1550-1750, Themes in British Social History (London: Longman, 1984), 55.

5.Alan Macfarlane, Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England, A Regional and Comparative Study (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 86.

6.C. L'Estrange Ewen, Witch Hunting and Witch Trials. The Indictments for Witchcraft from the Records of 1373 Assizes Held for the Home Circuit A.D. 1559-1736 (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1971); C. L'Estrange Ewen, Witchcraft and Demonianism (London: Heath Cranton Limited, 1933).

7.Macfarlane, 23-24.

8.Sharpe, 24.

9.G.K. Fortescue ed., Catalogue of the Thomason Tracts 1640-1661 volume 1-2, (1908); G.E. Aylmer, Rebellion or Revolution? England From Civil War to Restoration (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 65.

10.Hyder E. Rollins, Cavalier and Puritan (New York: The New York University Press, 1913).

11.Rollins, 6.

CHAPTER 1

THE HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF WITCHCRAFT IN WESTERN EUROPE

Although the subject of this thesis is the persecution of witches in England between 1640 and 1660, for several reasons it is imperative to provide an overview of the history and historiography of the great witch-hunt in all of western Europe. In the last while it has become somewhat of a fashion to refer to English witch trials as "unique" and to study them in isolation as if what was happening on the Continent was irrelevant. The argument is that the persecution of witches in England in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth century in significant ways differed from the persecutions on the Continent. In England, the concept of a witch as the agent of the devil was not as prominent, the witch's mark was more important in English

witch trials than her sexual transgressions with the incubus, and witch persecutions were not as severe as on the Continent. However, in point of fact, the English witch trials which took place between 1640 and 1660, appear to have aspects in common with the Continental witch trials. Between 1640 and 1660 in the context of religious, political and economic ferment these witch trials " ... moved rapidly towards a witch-terror of the continental type".[1] The prosecutions of witches in England peaked and declined at approximately the same time as the prosecutions of witches on the Continent. And as the recent renaissance in the historiography of witchcraft indicates persecution of witches all over western Europe contained some traits that were universal, such as the stereotype of the witch. It follows then that in order to understand the prosecution of witches in Cromwellian England we must survey briefly the European situation. The approaches used to explain the dynamics of European witch-hunt will undoubtedly enrich and increase our understanding of the persecutions in England, in the period 1640 to 1660.

Preconditions of the Witch-Hunt

In this first section we are trying to identify the preconditions which produced an environment conducive to witch-hunting. These were the mature development of the concept of witchcraft, the linking of the crime of witchcraft to the female sex, the dissemination and acceptance of witch-beliefs by educated Europeans, and finally

changes in criminal procedure. The concept of witchcraft current during the European witch craze consisted of a combination of four notions. First and foremost it was believed that a witch practised maleficium, that is, by the use of occult means she was able to perform maleficent deeds. She could either bring harm, illness or death to people and livestock, or cause some other misfortune that was equally as harmful.[2] The second witch-belief was the notion that a witch made a pact with the devil. The pact was concluded in a ritual ceremony that was sealed by an obscene kiss. By the end of the ceremony the witch was believed to be a servant of the devil from whom she obtained the power to hurt others. The third major component of the cumulative concept of witchcraft was the belief that witches could fly. And the final witch-belief was that periodically witches attended sabbaths in order to worship the devil. In the course of these meetings, witches engaged in obscene and immoral rites with the devil and each other.

How did this profile of the stereotype of the witch come into being? The notion of witchcraft "... is a composite phenomenon drawing from folklore, sorcery, heresy, and Christian theology."[3] The full definition of witchcraft consisting of the four elements described earlier took a long time to develop stretching roughly from the fourth century to the middle of the sixteenth century. The individual elements of the concept of witchcraft existed separately as early as in classical Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. For example, the notion of attending nocturnal meetings was a charge that was frequently levelled against early Christians and heretics. During

the Middle Ages various heretical groups like the Cathars and Waldensians sprang up in Europe. In an attempt to deal with these dissenters the clerical and lay elites demonized their behaviour. In the imaginations of the elites the heretics "... habitually met after dark to engage in secret orgies and ... reputedly worshipped the devil."[4] This stereotypical behaviour that was initially levelled against heretics was later used against witches in that during sabbaths witches were accused of similar abominations that were ascribed to heretics. The crucial stage in the development of the concept of witchcraft took place beginning in the thirteenth century when the two key elements, that a witch made a pact with the devil and attended sabbaths, were now linked to witchcraft. The pact with the Devil was interpreted to mean that a witch renounced God and Christianity in favour of the Devil.[5] Hence, by virtue of the pact alone a witch was a heretic and an enemy of the Christian Church. The second key element was the notion of the sabbath which was perceived by the educated elites as a conspiracy threatening and undermining Christianity and order.[6] The coalescence of all the separate ingredients into one cumulative concept of witchcraft paved the way for the great European witch-hunt.

Kieckhefer studied the court records of witch trials that took place during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. He divided the two hundred years into four broad periods: 1300-1330, 1330-1375, 1375-1435, and 1435-1500.[7] From his investigation he concluded that during the first two periods witch trials were rare and that witches were accused only of sorcery.[8] At the beginning of the third period the number of

witch trials began to increase along with accusations of diabolism.[9] And in the fourth period trials were not only most numerous but in trials involving diabolism the charge of maleficium was subdued and diabolism became the most prominent allegation.[10] Kieckhefer's work renders the development of the stereotype of the witch more plausible to historians in that "... instead of finding a thousand trials all at once, with a full-blown diabolism prominent in the charges one finds gradual evolutions and elaboration of witch prosecution."[11]

Malleus Maleficarum, also referred to as the "Hammer of Witches", established the decisive link between the crime of witchcraft and women.[12] Its principal author was Henri Insistoris (1430-1505), a zealous inquisitor in southern Germany.[13] The second and much less involved author, Jacques Sprenger (1436-1495), was a renowned and respected professor at the University of Cologne. Malleus was not an innovative work, rather it was a "... vast synthesis which based itself on scriptured texts, the scholastic tradition and the proceedings of witchcraft trials ..."[14] The "Hammer of Witches" became the authoritative text on the subject of witchcraft. It dealt extensively with many questions respecting witchcraft, covering in great detail such areas as the behaviour of witches and the entire process of detection, interrogation, torture and conviction. Its encyclopedic coverage insured its success as a reliable guidebook for future prosecuting judges, magistrates and with hunters. Its aim was to persuade and convince civil judges, theologians, ecclesiastics and zealous persecutors of the existing reality of witchcraft and its dangerous threat

to Christendom and the State.

The question over the work's importance spawned a controversy among historians. The frequent republication of Malleus throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provided convincing proof to some historians of the work's influence on European witch-hunts. Others refused to acknowledge a link between the increase in witch prosecutions and the Malleus.[15] They argued that the work's contribution was not original for the complete definition of witchcraft existed prior to its publication.[16] Furthermore, it was published in Latin, thus it had a very limited audience.[17] Finally, it was argued that more than half a century separated the first publication of Malleus and the witch-craze. What then is the importance of Malleus Maleficarum? Its significance, we argue, lies in linking the crime of witchcraft to the female sex. According to Elaine Camerlynck, "[o]ne of the essential characteristics of the Malleus is to affirm that this "heretical perversion" primarily affects women."[18] It has been argued by historians that in the Middle Ages two opposite or split images of women existed side by side. The Virgin Mary stood as the symbol of motherhood while Eve, because she caused the fall of man, symbolized women's wickedness. Some historians argue that the negative image predominated in medieval exegesis and was consequently adopted by the authors of the Malleus.[19]

Insistoris and Sprenger were convinced of the association they found existing

between witchcraft and women. The passages relating to women were imbued with misogyny. This misogynist trend did not go unnoticed by the modern editor of Malleus Montague Summers, who wrote in the introduction: "[h]owever, exaggerated as these may be, I am not altogether certain that they will not prove a wholesome and needful antidote in this feministic age ... For the Apostle S. Peter says: 'Let wives be subject to their husbands ... as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord: whose daughters you are, doing well, and not fearing any disturbance."[20] Sprenger and Insistoris argued that women were witches because they were wicked, intellectually like children, and inferior to men. "All witchcraft comes from carnal lust which is in women insatiable ... wherefore for the sake of fulfilling their lusts they consort even with devils ... "[21] As the weaker, feebler and more fragile sex women are "... more credulous; and since the chief aim of the devil is to corrupt faith, therefore he rather attacks them."[22]

The Malleus "..presente donc la femme sous deux aspects principaux: elle est faible de caractere et dangereuse car corrompue par la passion charnelle. Ces deux caracteristiques seront d'une importance primordiale dans le lien qui sera etabli entre la femme et la sorcellerie."[23] Insistoris and Sprenger argued furthermore, that most witches were midwives. The devil ensnared midwives in particular because of their role in assisting at childbirth, abortions and illnesses. The unexplainable sudden death or the birth of a still born baby meant that the midwife was in league with the devil.

The idea that a witch was also the sexual servant of the Devil was the final feature assimilated to the evolving stereotype of the witch.[24] Besides making a pact witches were also believed to engage in perverse sexual practices with the devil.[25] The sexual element included in the definition gave magistrates and judges the right to search witch's body for the devil's mark, which according to the experts was to be found on their "shameful parts", "on the breasts or private parts."[26] The search for the devil's mark gave rise to a whole profession of witch prickers.

Before large scale witch-hunts could even begin people on all levels of society had to be convinced of the existence of witches and the need to prosecute them. The belief in witches was ubiquitous. It extended from pauper to king. The theory of witchcraft as described above was adhered to by the vast majority of the educated elites who accepted the entire concept in full. The beliefs of peasants were much simpler. The distinction between the learned and popular beliefs was given full recognition in the work of Kieckhefer.

Kieckhefer maintains that he discovered a technique for distinguishing between popular and learned witch beliefs. He found that the depositions of judges were written in Latin, and reflected preoccupation with the devil while the depositions of the peasants were written in the vernacular, and they showed that peasants were mostly concerned with maleficium. This led him to conclude that the popular tradition laid emphasis on sorcery while the learned tradition stressed

diabolism.[27] Peasants accused witches out of fear and perceived danger of misfortune or harm a witch they believed had brought upon them. Judges and magistrates prosecuted witches because they saw them above all as "... member[s] of a secret, conspiratorial body organized and headed by Satan."[28] Kieckhefer argues that the witch beliefs of the elites and peasants remained separate in the early stages of witch trials, but as the trials progressed the learned notions were gradually transmitted to the lower levels of society where they merged.

Christina Larner argued that the rigid distinction between popular and learned beliefs is a chimera.[29] To her mind, "[w]itch confessions represent an agreed story between witch and inquisitor in which the witch drew through hallucination or imagination, on a common store of myth, fantasy, and nightmare, to respond to the inquisitor's questions."[30] The all too firm separation does not hold up when we examine some specific elements of witch-beliefs. The difficulty in separating the two traditions into strictly popular and learned systems becomes especially evident when we try to place the concept of nocturnal flight into one of the rigid categories. The notion that a witch could fly was a popular belief. Flying explained the witch's ability to transport herself over long distances in a very short time. In other words, it explained how she was able to attend sabbaths. The belief in witch's sabbaths was part of the elite tradition. This all too firm distinction between popular and elite beliefs is also blurred when it comes to the activities of both peasant and the ruling classes. On one hand, the peasants searched the witch's body for an insensitive spot

called the devil's mark. The sole purpose of the search was to prove that she had made a pact with the devil a belief adhered to strictly by the educated elites. On the other hand, "... lawyers demanded evidence of maleficium from the witch's neighbours before they would convict."[31] The belief that witches practised maleficium was a popular belief.

In Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe, Peter Burke also argued convincingly that the early modern notion of the witch was an amalgam of adopted beliefs from high and low cultures. According to him, in the early modern period the elite and popular cultures interacted on several levels until 1800 when the connection between them was severed completely. Not only did these cultures interact at markets, carnivals and festivals as well as on other occasions in a manner of two-way traffic but the dissemination of learned beliefs transformed the popular culture. During sermons, trials and public executions peasants were confronted with learned witch beliefs.[32] Clearly the methodology advanced by Kieckhefer is problematic. It is too rigid and it does not take into account the possibility of there being more than one level of popular culture. For instance, what was the impact of rising literacy on popular culture?[33] Yet Kieckhefer's methodology is a useful analytical tool for as Cohn notes: "... [b]ehind the accusations from below and the interrogations from above lie divergent preoccupations and aims. Just how they interlocked deserves detailed examination."[34]

Higher education did not exempt one from believing in witches and demonology. This is not to say that there were no sceptics or doubters. In fact, there was a great polemical debate concerning the reality of witchcraft. Its most notorious sceptic, Johan Weyer, was convinced that witchcraft was a delusion. In his De Praestigiis Daemonum (1563), he argued that "... witches are really harmless and confused old women, suffering from various physical and mental disorders ..."[35] And "what was supposedly done by old woman comes from the stupidity of old age, the inconstancy of her sex, fickleness, a weak mind, despair, and mental disease, when the old woman is deceived imaginarily or by the wiles of the evil spirit."[36] Throughout the whole period of massive witch-hunts no other sceptic advanced or improved Weyer's persuasive thesis against the persecution of witches. But, his arguments were successfully refuted in the short run by Jean Bodin. Bodin is usually remembered as an erudite scholar and statesman, the author of the Six Books of a Commonwealth (1576), which places him alongside Machiavelli as one of the greatest early modern political theorists.[37] Bodin truly convinced himself of the reality of witchcraft.[38] In Demonomania he completely demolished Weyer's arguments and integrity[39] by referring to Weyer as a "sorcerer masquerading as a physician" using his book to teach a thousand more damnable sorceries.[40] It is clear that during the hey day of the massive witch-hunting the defenders of witchcraft won the debate.

But did the demonological tracts reflect views that were widely held at the time or were these views directed at the unbelievers in order to convince them of the

evil of witchcraft? The elites and especially judges were not all unified in their acceptance of the belief in witchcraft argues Jonathan Pearl. It was to convince the unbelievers, Pearl asserts, that the tracts were written and therefore it is doubtful how ubiquitous the belief in witches was among the educated Europeans.[41] While it is true that elites were not unanimous in their beliefs it nevertheless appears that in the hundred years or so that massive witch trials took place there was a high degree of acceptance and readiness to believe in witchcraft. This credulity is illustrated by some of the stories written by Richard Baxter, the Puritan divine who took it for granted that witches were real in his Certainty of the World of Spirits (1691).[42]

The existence of a theory of witchcraft and public belief in and fear of witches were not sufficient for witch-hunting to flourish. It was changes within the legal system like the acquisition by secular courts of the jurisdiction over the crime of witchcraft, the use of torture, and the adoption of the inquisitional legal procedure that gave rise to the massive witch trials.[43] According to Levack, "... the great European witch-hunt was essentially a judicial operation."[44] The first legal change was the secularization of the crime of witchcraft. In the Middle Ages witch trials fell under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts. In the sixteenth century the jurisdiction passed into the hands of secular jurisdiction. In most European states stiff laws and statutes were passed to deal with the crime of witchcraft.[45] The use of torture along with suggestive questioning and coercive techniques provided judges

with long lists of suspected witches which resulted in higher conviction rates. It is accepted that "[w]ithout torture, the great witch-panics of the 1590s and late 1620s are inconceivable."[46]

The impact of torture on the outcome of witch trials is best illustrated through examples. Most widely known is the case of Johannes Junius, a German burgomaster from Bamberg. He was arrested in 1628 for witchcraft in the midst of a fast spreading witch panic among the populace. He was tortured until a confession was secured. Afterwards he was burned at the stake. His legacy to the history of witchcraft consists of a letter he wrote to his daughter denying the false accusations made against him. Because of his unwillingness to confess initially, Junius was tortured repeatedly, " ... the executioner," ... put [a] thumb-screw on me, both hands bound together, so that the blood ran out at the nails and everywhere, so that for four weeks I could not use my hands .... Thereafter they first stripped me, bound my hands behind me, and drew me up in the torture. Then I thought heaven and earth were at an end; eight times did they draw me up and let me fall again, so that I suffered terrible agony."[47] The repeated administration of torture broke Junius' resistance. "When at last the executioner led me back into the prison, he said to me: Sir, I beg you, for God's sake confess something, whether it be true or not. Invent something, for you cannot endure the torture which you will be put to, and, even if you bear it all, yet you will not escape ... but one torture will follow after another until you say you are a witch .... Now, my dear child, see in what hazard I stood and

still stand. I must say that I am a witch, though I am not, must now renounce God, though I have never done it before .... For all this I was forced to say through fear of the torture which was threatened beyond what I had already endured."[48]

What was needed besides the two legal changes aforementioned was an effective criminal procedure for hunting down and suppressing witches successfully. In Western Europe there were two legal systems under which witches were accused, interrogated and prosecuted: the inquisitorial process and the accusatory process. Both control systems gave distinct character to the rate of witchcraft prosecutions: ranging from the legal control of witchcraft as a large scale "industry" to the legal control of witchcraft as a small "racket".[49] Rather than being different, the two systems were part of a continuum in which "repressive control" was on one end and "restrained control" on the opposite end.[50]

Currie calls the inquisitorial procedure which was prevalent in Continental Europe repressive because it gave judges and magistrates extraordinary powers for suppressing witchcraft. In this process "... accusation, detection, prosecution and judgment are all in the hands of the official control system, rather than in those of private persons; and all of these functions reside basically in one individual."[51] On top of that, this type of control system was completely immune from external and internal restraints on its power. Theoretically, only the rigorous requirement of evidence consisting of the testimony of one witness and a confession protected the

accused. But this safety valve was also circumvented because the evidence was extracted under torture. The minimal limitation on the use of torture insured the forthcoming of confessions and long lists of names of other suspected witches. The repressive control system thus by virtue of its unlimited power was responsible for producing large scale panics, like the ones that took place in the German territories, for example, in Ortenau in 1627-8 a trial that began with four accused women ended with 39 executions over a nine day period.[52]

Currie called the accusatory procedure peculiar to England a restrained system of control largely because of its limited power. Here the procedure amounted essentially to a trial by jury. The role of the judge was merely to preside "... over a public inquest by twelve ordinary folk sworn to find the truth, before whom the accuser and the accused pleaded to issue and produced their evidence and arguments much as they would in a civil suit."[53] The high degree of internal restrictions accomplished by separating the functions of accusation, prosecution and judgment, and external restraints such as accountability to a higher court precluded the restrained system from assuming extraordinary powers.[54] The variety of restrictions resulted in a smaller number of executions in England as compared to the Continent. The standard prosecution was usually a single isolated case but there were also few small scale panics involving up to five people. However, the restrained control system was also vulnerable to abuse, specifically from the lower levels of society and those who coerced them. Although the jury was made up of the accused person's

neighbours, we must ask how much freedom they actually had to come up with their own verdict. As late as 1680 a contemporary observer complained that: "such a slavish fear attends many jurors, that let the court but direct to find guilty, or not guilty ... right or wrong accordingly they will bring in their verdict ... as the court sums up, they find; as if juries were appointed for no other purpose but to echo back what the bench would have done."[55]

The Dynamics and Some Explanations of Witch Prosecutions

The witch craze of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a widespread phenomenon. In Western Europe the areas affected by it included the Empire, Switzerland, France, England (including the American colonies), Ireland and parts of the Iberian peninsula.[56] Other parts of Europe also experienced witch trials but for the most part these took place a century later, like for example in Poland.

The persecution of witches during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was unique in that witches were prosecuted before and after this time sporadically but never on such a large scale.[57] The first half of the sixteenth century was a period of relative tranquillity as far as the prosecution of witches was concerned.[58] The one hundred years from 1550 to 1650 was a period of most intense witch-hunting and most numerous slaughter of witches. In a nutshell, "[t]he years 1550-1600 were worse

than the years 1500-1550, and the years 1600-1650 were worse still."[59] Starting around 1650 witch-hunts began to decline and eventually to disappear.

While single trials and small hunts generally rose in the second half of the sixteenth century, it was especially during the 1580's and 1590's when witch-hunts peaked.[60] In the first half of the following century, the 1630's proved by far the worst years for witch trials. According to Trevor-Roper, "... the slaughter has broken all previous records. It has become a holocaust in which lawyers, judges, clergy themselves join old women at the stake."[61] The aforementioned patterns of chronology represent, only at best, some broad regularities which historians like Trevor-Roper and Levack have discerned in witch trials for Western Europe as a whole. Historians working on regional and national studies know only too well of the chronological variations in different local cases. For example, in England the largest witch panic took place in the 1640s.

Exact numbers of persons executed for the crime of witchcraft, for the whole of Western Europe will never be known, due to the destruction of some records. Only the figures for specific localities, for some of which the evidence is extant, can be obtained and relied upon. Thus when trying to assess the intensity of witch prosecutions it may be more helpful to explain them in terms of a continuum which contains large scale witch hunts on one end and isolated cases on the opposite end.[62] Thus, we can say that persecutions in Germany, France and Switzerland were

most severe, those in Scotland were in the middle range, while those in England were significantly less. Elsewhere in Western Europe, in countries like Spain and Southern Italy, witch trials were almost completely avoided due to the Inquisition.[63] According to Midelfort, the German territories were the classic lands of the witch-hunt.[64] Witch-hunts like the one that took place between 1587 and 1593, sponsored by the Archbishop of Trier, where 368 witches were burned from amongst only twenty-two villages are representative. "So horrible was this hunt that two villages in 1585 were left with only one female inhabitant a piece."[65] On the opposite end of the scale were the scattered and ongoing individual prosecutions in England. Witchcraft prosecutions in England, argued Alan Macfarlane, were not epidemic but an endemic and regular feature of everyday village life in early modern England.[66]

What then gave rise to the persecutions of witches? We can begin to answer this question by studying the context in which the great witch-hunts took place.[67] We will try to assess the impact that the religious struggles, political turbulence and economic crisis had on the witch craze. We argue that these upheavals brought about profound changes that created heightened anxiety and social strife which were partially relieved by scapegoating an unassimilable group of people.[68]

Witch-hunts were carried out in areas that were religiously divided during the time of the twin Reformations. This temporal and regional relation led Trevor-Roper to argue that the witch craze was the product of religious conflict, specifically

the opposition between Catholics and Protestants.[69] He maintained that "... almost every local outbreak can be related to the aggression of one religion upon the other."[70] In France, for example, the worst persecution of witches coincided with the Wars of Religion.[71]

Jean Delumeau offers a different explanation of how Luther's and Rome's Reformations provoked witch-hunts in Europe. Instead of looking at the conflict between Catholics and Protestants, he focuses attention on their similarities and complementary aspects. He argues that during both Reformations the clergy, preachers, and missionaries attempted to imbue peasants, for the very first time, with a Christian belief that was spiritual as opposed to ritualistic.[72] The achievement of the Protestant and Catholic Reformation was the effective christianization of the common people in Europe's countryside. On the eve of the Reformation, the average rural person was christianized superficially [73] in the sense that his religious beliefs consisted of an amalgam of residual paganism, folklorized ceremonies and superstitious practices.[74]

What constituted everyday religion in the Middle Ages was interpreted as heresy during the Reformation.[75] In the drive for religious conformity, on the Continent the clergymen declared a war on superstition, magic and paganism. The witch became a symbol of anti-religion and heresy. Each time a witch was burned at the stake "... so it was thought - the flames also consumed the symbols and the last

vestiges of 'abuses', 'excesses' and 'superstitions' ... "[76] Furthermore, the priest looked upon the work of the magician - acceptable prior to the Reformation - with suspicion. The antagonism between them was the result of a new hostility between religion and magic.[77]

The Reformation also brought about an increased fear of the Devil, emphasis on piety and personal responsibility and a deep sense of sin. According to Delumeau, the mood of the time was one of a "... hyperacute awareness of sin, that obsession with hell, that emphatic and almost morbid delight in the original fault ... "[78] The fact that responsibility for sin and guilt was often laid at the feet of the witches was also noticed by the contemporary Reginald Scot who urged that: "[l]et us also learne and confesse with the Prophet David, that we our selves are the causes of our afflictions; and not exclaime upon witches, when we should call upon God for mercie."[79]

The witch-hunting phenomenon also coincided with the growing of nation states a period of political reorganization and upheaval. The structure of European society changed away from decentralized systems based on provincialism and vertical relationships to centralized structures based on nationalism and horizontal relationships. The growing power of the state was based on the notion of unlimited monarchy.[80] In an attempt to centralize their government and obtain the loyalty and social conformity of their subjects the absolutizing monarchs "... introduced

standing armies, a permanent bureaucracy, national taxation, a codified law, and the beginning of a unified market."[81] These changes in turn provoked political and social upheaval. The whole century of intense witch-hunting coincided with wars, revolutions and peasant uprisings. In addition to the changes brought about by political restructuring the threat of peasant unrest created the states' concern and obsession with their subjects' obedience and the keeping of order.[82] This struggle to suppress anarchy went hand in hand with the efforts of the clergy for religious uniformity.

This theme was taken up by Robert Muchembled who argued that the agents of popular royal power consciously repressed popular culture in order to obtain loyalty and social conformity from their subjects. In this process, they singled out witchcraft as a specific brand of popular culture, because in the mind of the ruling elites witches were members of a satanic conspiracy threatening their authority. For example, writes Muchembled: "[w]hen the social situation took a turn for the worse the fear of the witch was connected, in the minds of those who had the most to lose, with their obsessive fear of revolts and of the violence of the have-nots. When a witch was burned, the fear of a more general uprising was alleviated, at least for the time being. It is in this sense that it seems to me that we should interpret the ideas that 'witchcraft ... readily flourishes ... on a class front.' The witch was rarely a conscious social rebel. Events moved too fast for her: this was the crime for which she was executed. In reality, her persecutors in the village indistinctly felt that their

power was being threatened by the muffled hatred of those who lived in poverty and lived lives of mediocrity ...".[83] Conformity was achieved by defining a dominant cultural model which defined what constituted acceptable social norms.[84] "Terror was induced by the innumerable fires that were lit both to burn witches and to consume popular culture."[85]

The persecution of witches was not a phenomenon which persisted independently of the economy. Rather the profound economic changes aggravated discontent by adding more fuel to the fire. In the broadest sense, the Western European economy was in the midst of a transition from a feudal to capitalist structure. The one hundred year period, from 1550 to 1650, in which the witch craze was at its height, coincided with a period of severe economic difficulties. The general crisis of the seventeenth century were generated by the price revolution of the sixteenth century.[86] In the second half of the sixteenth century, demographic expansion, steep price rises, and the drastic decline of real wages ushered in a period of general economic decline.[87] Some of the consequences included: expropriation of the peasants, pauperization, proletarianization, and a sharpened polarization between the landless poor and the prosperous elite.[88] Overpopulation and a widening gap between needs and resources led to the growing numbers of poor, vagrants and beggars all living in grinding poverty. The economic situation of many deteriorated.[89] To many contemporaries "... the number of poor and the problem of poverty were both of unprecedented dimensions."[90] The picture of peasant life

that emerges is one of lives being lived close to subsistence level, chronic undernourishment and lurking threat of hunger. For some, the possibility of starvation was a reality, in "Newcastle .... An entry in the town accounts reads:October 1657. Paid for the charge of buringe 16 poore folkes who died for wante in the strettes 6s.8d."[91]

A Scottish judge made the following comment in 1678: "I went when I was a Justice-depute to examine some Women who had confest judicially, and one of them, who was silly creature, told me under secresie that she had not confest becourse she was guilty, but being a poor creature who wrought for her meat and being defam'd for a witch, she knew she would starve, for no person thereafter would either give her meat or lodging; and that all men would beat her, and hound Dogs at her, therefore she desir'd to boe out of the World."[92] The depressed state of the peasant classes was further exacerbated by exogenous factors like: epidemics, plagues, wars and poor harvests.[93] For those who already lived close to the starvation line these unlooked-for disasters aggravated further their destitute existence. Not infrequently these scourges created famines.[94] Undoubtedly, these long-term subsistence crises were at the root of social tensions and a mood of anxiety, fear and insecurity.

Two American historians Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum gave a new interpretation to the outbreak of witchcraft in Salem, in 1692, when they explained

it within larger economic historical trends. That episode, they argued, brought to the surface a conflict between two opposing factions, where "... a culture in which a subsistence peasant-based economy was being subverted by mercantile capitalism."[95] The conflict which divided Salem Village into two primary factions, was the dispute over the villages's political and ecclesiastical autonomy. One faction struggled for the community's autonomy from Salem Town. It consisted of members whose money was tied up in land and whose unsuccessful commercial ventures led them to economic decline. This faction advocated the prosecution of witches. The other faction was represented by members who argued against the village's political autonomy. They had close economic ties with Salem Town and shared in the town's prosperity. This faction remained aloof to the prosecution of witches. It seems that, the previously mentioned faction resorted to witchcraft accusations in order to explain their economic losses.

The fact that witches were nearly always women is the one feature that is universal in all European witch-hunts. On the average 80 per cent of the accused witches were female but in some regions almost every accused witch was a woman.[96] We can account for the 20 per cent of men accused of witchcraft in four ways.[97] The majority of accused men were related to witches. Others were convicted of witchcraft when they were found guilty of additional crimes.[98] Others still were accused by virtue of being old or handicapped.[99] Finally, accusations against men escalated during large scale witch panics when the stereotype of the

witch tended to break down and anybody was liable to become a victim.[100] It follows then, that to a large extent the European witch-hunt was also a "woman hunt".[101] Therefore, it is important to use gender, along with economic, political and religious factors, as a significant tool of analysis for interpreting the European witch craze.

Another common feature that is constant throughout European witch trials is the sociological profile of the witch. The stereotype of the witch was a woman of particular age, economic and marital status and also a person with specific personality and behavioral traits. The average age of a woman accused of witchcraft was above fifty.[102] The disproportionate percentages of widows and spinsters accused of being witches indicates that women who were unattached to men ran a higher risk of accusation.[103] The behaviour and personality of a witch was nonconformist and deviant. Contemporaries described her as a scold, slanderess and disturber of order. When she behaved in a totally independent manner she was accused of being a "liber".[104] A witch was especially known for having a foul mouth, "... a ready, sharp and angry tongue."[105] In addition to bad-temper, she had the audacity to threaten her neighbours by placing curses on them when they refused to make good on her request.[106] In the Jura region, witches were described as habitual quarrellers.[107]

By far the vast majority of witches were drawn from the lower levels of

society.[108] Women were often forced to beg and rely on their neighbours' charity in order to make ends meet. Beggars and midwives were the classic witches.[109] According to Thomas and Macfarlane the most common situation was one in which an elderly and poor woman begged her neighbour for some small trifling thing. Disappointed and angry by being turned away empty handed she put a maleficent curse on her neighbour. In due course a misfortune befell the reluctant neighbour who then blamed and accused the beggar of being a witch.[110] Women's work induced many to became midwives. As a nurturer "[s]he was a specialist in the human body, and she knew its form by dressing it, its belly by nourishing it, and its vital functions by observing them as she cared for her children."[111] Midwives were accused because of the nature of their work in assisting in childbirth and curing diseases. Accusations of witchcraft tended to fall also on women who were spinners, prostitutes and tavern keepers. In short, the vast majority of witches were poor, old, solitary and deviant women.[112]

Why were these type of women persecuted for witchcraft? A few hypothesis have been advanced as to why women were singled out for witchcraft. These range from attributing the persecution of witches to misogyny all the way to using the witch model as a tool of social control.[113] For the peasantry however, a witch was often nothing more than an economic liability, and extra drain on their meagre resources. These hypothesis are not conclusive and neither are they satisfactory in that they fail to treat witchcraft as an integral part of women's history. Nobody any longer doubts

the unshakeable connector of women with witchcraft. Despite such proof historians of witchcraft have not dealt with witch-hunting as an attack on women. In her article "On Studying Witchcraft as Women's History: A Historiography of the European Witch Persecutions", Anne Llewlyn Barstow argued that "[b]y this time in the development of witchcraft studies, a pattern of denial is clear. Historians ... were refusing to treat women as a recognizable historical group. Reading these works is like reading accounts of the Nazi holocaust in which everyone agrees that the majority of victims were Jewish but no one mentions anti-Semitism ...."[114] To study the great witch-hunts properly we must take into consideration changes in the economy, structure of the family, and changes in the role and status of women.[115] To understand the position of women in the early modern period we must view their lives in the context of patriarchy.

According to Gerda Lerner: "[p]atriarchy in its wider definition means the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power. It does not imply that women are either totally powerless or totally deprived of rights, influence, and resources."[116] Furthermore, she added that "[t]he system of patriarchy can function only with the cooperation of women. This cooperation is secured by a variety of means: gender indoctrination ... the dividing of women, one from the other, by defining

'respectability' and 'deviance' ..."[117]

In summary then, the term patriarchy refers to the male-dominated social system, under which women had to live in 17th century England. However, patriarchy is not a constant, it changes with time. In the early modern period the position of women in England was overtly inferior and sanctioned by the Church and State. Women were thought to have been morally, physically and spiritually inferior to men. It was generally accepted by the whole society at that time that "woman was the weaker vessel."[118] For example, in marriage the wife was her husband's subordinate partner who owed her husband obedience. Under the English common law, a woman had absolutely no rights; when living with her father "her rights were swallowed up in her father's"[119], and when she married her property was transfered to her husband. In education, men and women were taught very different subjects, so that the education that women recived was just a further handicap.

What was the impact of the religious, political and economic changes on the roles and status of women in early modern Europe? The answer to this question is still debated and perhaps it may not even be possible to resolve it for it is seems impossible to verify whether women's roles or the ideas of what was expected of them changed. Nevertheless, some historians argue that as a consequence of this general crisis women's status increased. To prove this hypothesis they point

especially towards the new roles women gained within the family as wives and mothers. The movement of the twin Reformations placed a much higher premium on family life as opposed to single life. Although the family structure remained patriarchal, it is argued that the status of married women within the family was better. Their roles of wife and mother were respected, marriage was considered to be a partnership of mutual responsibility and women were allowed to divorce in some cases.[120] The same changes provided other women with new opportunities that were outside the home. Women were seen petitioning the Parliament, participating in grain and bread riots, holding their own employs, preaching, prophetising, "... spouting texts and interpreting God's word ..."[121] These women acted in an independent manner by fulfilling roles that were traditionally the reserve of men. They espoused the idea that "... women are free born as men, have as free election and as free spirits ..."[122] These real changes were all mirrored in the way women were portrayed in plays. Between 1580 and 1650 women, according to Notestein, were depicted as independent, confident and spirited.[123]

Others argue that women's roles declined and became restricted primarily to the private sphere. The loss of women's power in the economy has been chartered for midwives and brewsters. The role of women as folk healers has always been needed and respected. However, at the time of the great witch-hunts midwives found themselves challenged by the Church and the emerging male medical profession.[124] According to Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English the persecution of midwives

for witchcraft was part of a larger phenomena that of the male medical professional trying to suppress the female midwives from practising medicine initially through witch trials and then by barring women from universities. The same encroachment was experienced by female brewers who lost what traditionally has been a female trade to men.[125] The profound changes weakened the position of some women. Women were left with fewer choices and opportunities within the patriarchal system, for example, the encouragement of marriage left a growing percentage of single women outside what was considered to be the acceptable and normal vocation of women. Furthermore, the dissolution of convents and monasteries closed the single acceptable avenue for life outside the family.[126] It would appear that the general crisis had adverse effects in particular on the lives of unmarried and widowed women.

By taking advantage of some of the new unintended opportunities, that were considered threatening, these women risked being accused of witchcraft. The traditional misogyny and the notion of women as by nature disorderly furthered the concern of lay and clerical elites about atypical women.[127] These nonconformist women threatened the sanctity of the family and order in society at large. When in seventeenth century New England, Mrs. Hutchinson was called to trial over the Antinomian controversy, Governor Winthrop had this to say: "Mrs. Hutchinson, you are called here as one of those that have troubled the peace of the commonwealth and the churches here ...."[128] "You have stepped out of your place .... [y]ou have

rather been a husband than a wife, and a preacher than a hearer, and a magistrate than a subject, and so you have thought to carry all things in church and commonwealth as you would and have not been humbled for it."[129] Witches served as an ultimate example for other women of what was considered to be inappropriate female behaviour.[130]

The Decline of Witch Trials

The prosecution of witches declined rapidly beginning around 1650. A sudden drop in the number of executions and increasing rise in acquittals set in almost a century before the official witch-laws were repealed. The collapse of witch-hunting is the most difficult phase of the European witch craze to explain. Broadly speaking, the decline coincided with the Scientific Revolution. The scientific movement gave rise to a new philosophy which in the course of the seventeenth century replaced the traditional and magical view of the universe with mechanical philosophy. Secondly, new attitudes towards proof demanded that evidence be demonstrated before the correct verdict was passed making accusations against witches increasingly harder to sustain. Hence, the witch trials ceased because the beliefs and certainty of proof of those who controlled the legal process changed.[131]

Brian Easlea suggests in his book, that the rapid decline of witch-hunting in

the second half of the seventeenth century began almost contemporaneously with the rise of mechanical philosophy. Mechanical philosophy changed the entire concept of the universe from one in which God and other spirits intervened capriciously in the daily events of life, to one in which God was resigned to the position of a "Divine Creator and Retired Engineer".[132] The mechanical philosophers claimed that all phenomena can be explained in mechanical terms and that the universe was orderly and regular.[133] The new philosophy eroded the belief in magical explanations of events. There was no room left for the devil and the supernatural powers of the witch, hence they were abolished. The educated elites embraced the new mechanical philosophy because it enabled them to become the "masters and possessors of nature" and furthermore because it legitimized their authority and power over inferiors, especially women.[134] Women were perceived as the weaker sex, intellectually inferior, in fact they were equated with nature.[135] Easlea argues that: "[w]ithin the privileged classes men claimed the right to rule over women because of supposed male predominance of intellect; men associated themselves with mind and rational activity, women with matter and carnal instincts, Mind over matter: crudely such a distinction captures an important component of the male ruling classes' attempted legitimisation of both class and sex inequalities."[136]

The decline also coincided with the evolution of court's attitude toward the crime of witchcraft.[137] This argument is based on a detailed and well documented case study of the decline of the witch craze in France, by R. Mandrou and a criticism

of it by Alfred Soman. Mandrou argued that the Paris Parlementaires underwent a crisis of conscience.[138] In their contacts with theologians, doctors of medicine and scientists they became increasingly sceptical about the very possibility and certainty of the crime. Henceforth they initiated a campaign to prevent convictions by insisting that all witchcraft sentences can be appealed.

Soman argues that the magistrates of the Parliament of Paris became sceptical about the proof and evidence of witchcraft independent of other intellectuals. Infamous cases of hysterical imposture, gross abuses of justices and trials involving sensational scandals influenced the magistrates and made them aware of the difficulty of proving the crime. The abuses of torture, for example, made them question the credibility of confessions extracted when the accused "... had their thumbs smashed with hammers; ... were hoisted into the air and 'grilled' over a fire; ... [or] were summarily tossed into the water - which is what happened to Alison Legrand, even though she was pregnant."[139] The Parlementaires took punitive action against subordinate magistrates who abused the system. They were sought out - some being suspended while others were forced to do public penance.[140] Soman criticizes Mandrou's thesis by arguing that "[t]he chief problem for the high court was not so much the reality of the crime of witchcraft as it was the maintenance of public order and the imposition of high standards of criminal justice upon a lower magistracy far from easy to control."[141]

Conclusion

From this brief overview of the European witch craze we have learned that the full concept of witchcraft was made up of four elements: maleficium, pact with the devil, flight and sabbath. The complete concept of witchcraft, the linking of the crime of witchcraft to the female sex, the full acceptance of witch-beliefs and legal changes were some of the necessary preconditions that made the great European witch-hunt possible. After a short analysis of the geographical and chronological developments we looked at some possible explanations of why the European witch craze took place. On this historical question we found no consensus of opinion nevertheless we were able to discern some categories of interpretation. Economic, political and religious changes are tools for explaining the prosecution of witches. The impact of the Reformation, growth of nation states and economic crisis created a context of anxiety and obsession with order which was resolved by hunting down witches. Furthermore, the universal scapegoating of old, poor, atypical women make gender, age and patriarchy important instruments of analysis. Here we noted in particular the importance of interpreting witchcraft as integral part of women's history by asking questions that deal with women's status, social roles and the family. Finally, in the third phase of the great witch-hunt we tried to present the present state of debate on the question why witches ceased to be persecuted in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

Endnotes

1.Trevor R. Davies, Four Centuries of Witch Beliefs, (London: Benjamin Bloom, Inc., 1972), 15. In the main, it is Keith Thomas and Alan Macfarlane who have argued vehemently that English witch trials are fundamentally different from the Continental ones. Trevor R. Davis, on the other hand, produced evidence to the contrary and argues that English witch trials resemble Continental ones. This debate is far from being settled, although more recent historians of witchcraft such as Christina Larner, for example, argue for a more integrated approach.

2.The different components which made up the cumulative concept of witchcraft are described by the following: Geoffrey Scarre, Witchcraft and Magic in 16th and 17th Century Europe, (New York: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1987), 4; Brian P. Levack, The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe, (London: Longman, 1987), 4-10, 25-45; Norman Cohn, Europe's Inner Demons, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975), 100.

3.The study of the development of the European concept of witchcraft owes a great debt to the works of such scholars as Jeffrey Russel, Norman Cohn and Richard Kieckhefer. Jeffrey Burton Russell, Witchcraft in the Middle Ages, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 1-27; Cohn, 99-126, 147-164.

4.H.R. Trevor-Roper, "The European Witch-Craze" in Max Marwick, ed., Witchcraft and Sorcery, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1970), 128.

5.Russell, 174.

6.M.C. Erik Midelfort, Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany, 1562-1684, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), 20; Rossell Hope Robbins, The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology, (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1959), 414.

7.Richard Kieckhefer, European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300-1500, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 10.

8.Ibid., 16.

9.Ibid., 18.

10.Ibid., 23.

11.Ibid., 21.

12.Hugh Redwald, Trevor-Roper, The European Witch-Craze of the 16th and 17th Centuries, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969), 24.

13.Elaine Camerlynck, "Feminite et sorcellerie chez les theoriciens de la demonologie a la fin du Moyen Age: Etude du Malleus Maleficarum", Renaissance and Reformation 7 (1983): 14.

14.Ibid., 15.

15.Ibid., 15.

16.Cohn, 225.

17.Midelfort, 5.

18.Camerlynck, 15.

19.Ibid., 16.

20.Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, The Malleus Maleficarum, trans. with and introduction by Reverend Montague Summers, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971), xxxix.

21.Lois Houb, "Who Were the Witches", Women of Power 16 (spring 1990): 59.

22.Kramer, 43.

23.Camerlynck, 16.

24.Joseph Klaits, Servants of Satan, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 58.

25.Ibid., 53.

26.Ibid., 57.

27.Kieckhefer, 32.

28.Cohn, 252.

29.Christina Larner, Enemies of God: The Witch-Hunt in Scotland, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 24.

30.Ibid., 136.

31.Christina Larner, Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., 1984), 32.

32.Kieckhefer, 91.

33.Larner, Enemies of God, 24.

34.Richard Horsely, "Who Were the Witches? The Social Roles of Accused in the European Witch Trials", Journal of Interdisciplinary History 9 (spring, 1979): 692; Cohn, 255.

35.William E. Monter, European Witchcraft, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1969), 37.

36.Ibid., 41.

37.Alan C. Kors and Edward Peters, Witchcraft in Europe 1100-1700: A Documentary History, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1972), 213.

38.H.R. Trevor-Roper, "The European Witch-Craze", 135.

39.Monter, European Witchcraft, 47.

40.Ibid., 41.

41.Jonathan L. Pearl, "French Catholic Demonologists and their Enemies in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries" Church History 52 (1983): 457.

42.Richard Baxter, The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits, (London: C. Parknist and J. Salsbury, 1691), 250.

43.Levack, 64.

44.Ibid., 63.

45.Ibid., 78-82.

46.Trevor-Roper, The European Witch-Craze of the 16th and 17th Centuries, 46.

47.Klaits, 129.

48.Ibid., 129-130.

49.E.P. Currie, "Crimes Without Criminals: Witchcraft and Its Control in Renaissance Europe", Law and Society Review 3 (1968): 21-24.

50.Ibid., 8.

51.Ibid., 12.

52.Midelfort, 126.

53.J.S. Cockburn, ed., Crime in England, 1550-1800, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1977), 21.

54.Currie, 20.

55.Cockburn, 24.

56.Levack, 176.

57.Larner Witchcraft and Religion, 36.

58.Levack, 172.

59.Trevor-Roper "The European Witch-Craze", 121.

60.Levack, 173-4.

61.Trevor-Roper "The European Witch-Craze", 127.

62.Levack, 156-7.

63.Larner Witchcraft and Religion, 4.

64.H.C. Midelfort, "Heartland of the Witch Craze: Central and Northern Europe", History Today 31 (1981): 27.

65.Ibid., 28.

66.Alan Macfarlane, Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), 30.

67.Robert Muchembled, Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France 1400-1750, trans. by Lydia Cochrane, (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 278.

68.Trevor-Roper The European Witch Craze, 52.

69.Ibid., 67.

70.Ibid., 71.

71.Ibid., 72.

72.Jean Delumeau, Catholicism Between Luther and Voltaire, (london: Burns & Oates, 1977), 161.

73.Ibid., 161.

74.Ibid., 172.

75.Klaits, 61.

76.Muchembled, 185.

77.Delumeau, 171.

78.Ibid., 126.

79.Reginald Scot, The Discoverie of Witchcraft, introduced by Hugh Ross Williamson, (Arundel: Centaur Press, 1964), 26.

80.Muchembled, 312.

81.Perry Anderson, Lineages of the Absolutist State, (Bristol: Western Printing Services Ltd., 1974), 17.

82.Muchembled, 230.

83.Ibid., 258.

84.Ibid., 185.

85.Ibid., 234.

86.Peter Kriedte, Peasants, Landlords and Merchant Capitalists: Europe and the World Economy, 1500-1800, (Warwickshire: Berg Publishers, 1979), 2.

87.Ibid., 48-51.

88.Keith Wrightson and David Levine, Poverty and Piety in an English Village, Terling, 1525-1700, (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 2.

89.Kriedte, 52.

90.H. Kamen, The Iron Century, Social Change in Europe 1550-1660, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 387.

91.Ibid., 34.

92.Ibid., 242.

93.Kriedte, 63.

94.E.J. Hobsbawm, "The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th Century", Past and Present (1953-1958): 35.

95.Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 178.

96.Larner Witchcraft and Religion, 61-85; Nachman Ben-Yehuda, "Problems Inherent in Socio-Historical Approaches to the European Witch Craze", (Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, vol. 20 1981), 328.

97.Larner Witchcraft and Religion, 87.

98.Ibid., 62.

99.E. William Monter, Witchcraft in France and Switzerland, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), 197.

100.Midelfort, 2.

101.Larner Enemies of God, 3, 100.

102.Levack, 128.

103.This point is made by Carol F. Karlsen, The Devil in the Shape of a Woman, (New York: Random House, Inc., 1989)

104.Larner, Witchcraft and Religion, 185.

105.Larner Enemies of God, 97.

106.Cohn, 249.

107.Monter, 136.

108.Ibid., 138.

109.Klaits, 86; Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, Witches, Midwives, and Nurses A History of Women Healers, (New York: Feminist Press, 1973), 12-15.

110.Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 661.

111.Muchembled, 66.

112.The argument that most witches were spinners was made by Helen A. Berger, "Witchcraft and the Domination of Women: The English Witch Trials Reconsidered", (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1983); Klaits, 95; Clarke Garret, "Women and Witches: Patterns of Analysis", Signs 3 (1977-78): 465; Albert G. Hess, "Hunting Witches: A Survey of Some Recent Literature", Criminal Justice History (1982): 64-5; Richard Horsely, "Who Were the Witches? The Social Roles of the

Accused in the European Witch Trials", Journal of Interdisciplinary History 9 (spring 1979): 689; Carolyn Matalene, "Women as Witches", International Journal of Women's Studies 1 (1978): 579-582.

113.Although misogyny is a form of social control, we are using the terms separately because historians of witchcraft use the them separately as explanations. Trethowan, for example, uses only misogyny to explain the persecutions of witches. He argues that witch trials originated from clerical celibacy; that is, "sexual desires then inhibited have a strong and sadistic tendency to become a force of destruction, and that a fear-laden rejection of woman rose to a raging campaign of revenge and annihilation against her."(Scarre, 51) Others argue that misogyny, or the low opinion of women led to the belief that women could be readily perusaded by the devil to become his servants. This was precisely the line of argument used by the authors of the Malleus Maleficarum. Muchembled, on the other hand explains witch trials by the use of the social control model only. He argues that religious and secular authorities played a large role in the persecutions of witches, because of that witch trials were nothing more than an insturment of social control, a way by which the powerful could extend their power over the weak. Christina Larner, as far as we know, is the only scholar who uses the model of social control and extends it to women arguing that women were persecuted for witchcraft because they did not fit the proper image of what it meant to be a woman.

114.Anne Llewellyn Barstow, "On Studying Witchcraft as Women's History. A Historiography of the European Witch Persecutions", Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion 4 (1988): 13, 9; Alan Anderson and Raymond Gordon, "Witchcraft and the Status of Women - The Case of England", British Journal of Sociology (summer 1978): 172.

115.Nachman Ben-Yehuda, "The European witch Craze of the 14th to 17th Centuries: A Sociologist's Perspective", American Journal of Sociology 86 (summer 1980): 2, 19-25; Nachman Ben-Yehuda, "The European Witch Craze of the 14th-17th Centuries - A Brief Overview", Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion: 330-332; Leland L. Estes, "Incarnations of Evil: Changing Perspectives on the European Witch Craze", Clio 13 (1984): 143; William Monter, "The Historiography of Witchcraft: Progress and Prospects", Journal of Interdisciplinary History 2 (spring 1972); 450-1.

116.Gerda Lerner, The Creation of Patriarchy, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 239.

117.Ibid., 217.

118.Fraser, 1.

119.Ibid., 5.

120.Natalie Zemon Davis, Society and Culture in Early Modern France, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), 68; Sherrin Marshall Wyntjes, "Women in the Reformation Era", in Bridenthal and Koonz, Becoming Visible, (Boston, 1977), 173.

121.Sheila Rowbotham, Women, Resistance and Revolution, chpt. 7, (London: Allan Lane The Penguin Press, 1972), 18; Davis, 81, 146; Keith Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects", (Past and Present, 1958), 55.

122.Alan Anderson and Raymond Gordon, "Witchcraft and the Status of Women. The Case of England", British Journal of Sociology 29 (1978): 178.

123.S. Cohn, Folk Devils and Moral Panics, (London: MacGibbons & Kee, 1972), 99; Anderson and Gordon, 177.

124.Ehrenreich and English, 4-6; Barstow, 8; Horsely, 709; Anderson and Gordon, 175.

125.Rowbotham, 26.

126.Davis, 89; Rowbotham, 22.

127.C. Marchant, The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution, chapter 5 (San Francisco; Harper and Row Publishers, 1979), 127.

128.Kai T. Erikson, Wayward Puritans, (New York: John Wiley & Sons. Inc., 1966), 93.

129.Rowbotham 12.

130.Erika Jong, Witches, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1966), 93.

131.Barbara J. Shapiro, Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England, chpt. 11, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 211.

132.Brian Easlea, Witch-hunting, Magic and the New Philosophy, (Brighton: The Harvester Press, Ltd., 1980), 198.

133.Ibid., 11.

134.Ibid., 112.

135.Berger, 179.

136.Easlea, 242.

137.Alfred Soman, "The Parlament of Paris and the Great Witch Hunt 1565-1640", Sixteenth Century Journal 9 (1978): 31.

138.Easlea, 200.

139.Soman, 38.

140.Ibid., 39.

141.Ibid., 44.

CHAPTER 2

WITCHCRAFT AND ECONOMY

In this chapter we are mainly concerned with the extent to which the English witch trials between 1640 and 1660 were influenced by economic changes. The chapter will be divided into three sections: one identifying the accusers; the second dealing with how economic changes caused tension between classes; and, finally, the reasons why lower class women were singled out to be prosecuted for witchcraft. Our intention is to show that the trials of this period reflect a conflict between classes caused by economic changes and expressed in the prosecution of women who had become relatively autonomous and out of place in a patriarchal society.

The Witch's Accusers

In this first section, we describe the people who took legal action against witches by examining two of the most notorious witch-hunts of the period. A

detailed description of the two episodes provides us with a picture of the accusers of witches and illustrates the extent of their power. The two witch-hunts took place in the midst of regular and ongoing witch trials.[1] The bloodiest of these hunts took place between 1645 and 1647 in the south east of England. Because it was the most severe of the witch-hunts and also well-documented it will be dealt with at greater length than the second, which took place between 1649 and 1650 in northern England, and was much smaller.[2] We will also note the various and unscrupulous methods the persecutors employed to accuse suspects of witchcraft and wring confessions from them.

The witch-hunt which lasted from 1645 to 1647 exceeded any before or after and was due in part to the efforts of the self-styled witch-finder General Matthew Hopkins.[3] We have information about the campaign of Hopkins because his activities were abundantly documented.[4] Hopkins did not work alone: John Stearne, his fellow-agent, and Mary Philips, a "witch pricker"; travelled with Hopkins and the three worked as a team.[5] Together they visited the counties of Essex, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Norfolk.[6] They moved quickly from town to village and wherever they went they left a trail of bloodshed. Two hundred witches, most of them women, were executed in their campaign to rid England of these wretches.[7] It is difficult to arrive at a total number of people executed for witchcraft in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, mainly because the records are incomplete. The best speculation is that less than 1000 were

executed.[8] The trials and executions during the Hopkins campaign were thus unprecedentedly and abnormally high with two hundred executions in a two year period. This figure of two hundred given by Hopkins' associate is also in dispute because other contemporaries recorded much higher numbers.[9]

Hopkins and John Stearne cannot take the blame for these executions by themselves. In his pamphlet entitled The Discovery of Witches, in which he tried to vindicate his actions, Hopkins wrote that "[h]e never went to any towne or place, but they rode, writ, or sent often for him, and were ... glad of him."[10] Almost a century later, Francis Hutchinson, who was a vicar at Bury St. Edmonds where massive witch hunts took place, and later became a bishop of Down and Connor,[11] wrote an essay entitled Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft with Observation Upon Matters of Fact.(1718). In it, he reprinted a letter written by Hopkins to a parishioner of Great Stoughton who was either a magistrate or a civic functionary, which further confirms the point, that Hopkins was invited by town officials to come and search out witches. "My service to your Worship presented, I have this day received a Letter, Ec. to come to a Town called "Great Stoughton", to search for evil disposed Persons, called Witches .... I intend to give your Town a visit suddenly ... but I would certainly know afore, whether your town ... {is} willing to give and afford us good Welcome and Entertainment, as otherwhere I have been, else I shall wave your Shire ... and betake me to such Places, where I doe, and may persist without Controle, but with Thanks and Recompense. So I humbly take my leave, and rest. Your servant to be

Commanded Matthew Hopkins"[12] Furthermore, Hutchinson recorded that in Bury St. Edmonds, the judge preached sermons to the jury before the trials began. What was said is lost but the result was that great numbers of witches were executed.[13]

Hopkins and other parish ruling elites convicted many women for witchcraft by subjecting them to witch-finding techniques and coercing them to confess.[14] Usually the process began when suspected witches were rounded up by constables and subjected to a swimming test or their bodies were searched for the "Devil's marks". Swimming was an ordeal by immersion in water designed to determine the innocence or guilt of the alleged witch.[15] The contemporary Sir Robert Filmer in his An Advertisement to the Jury-Men of England, Touching Witches (1653) described swimming as a method consisting of tying the witch "cross bound", that is, her right thumb to the left toe and her left thumb to the right toe and then immersing her in water. If she floated she was guilty and if she sank she was pronounced innocent: if she was lucky she might escape or be rescued before drowning.[16] The second test used as proof of the witch's guilt, consisted of searching her body for the "Witch's marks" or the "Devil's marks". The "Witch's marks" were technically any supernumerary body parts such as breasts and nipples commonly referred to as teats. In theory, it was believed, that possession of such teats proved that witches suckled imps or familiars, which were the agents of devil that appeared in the shape of a cat, mouse, or rat, and were employed by the witches to do harm to others.[17] The devil, it was believed branded all his servants with

"Devil's marks,", which looked very much like flea-bites or were little different from natural blemishes of the skin. These spots were easy to identify because they were insensitive to pain.[18] The discovery of these marks on witches' bodies almost always led to speedy confessions that were extracted without much trouble.[19] If in the course of a confession a witch testified that she had seen others at the Devil's sabbath, this accusation sufficed to have other witches arrested.[20] Justices of the Peace used basically four methods to procure confessions from witches based upon preconceived notions that they were in league with the devil or guilty of copulation with him (the devil appearing then in the shape of a man dressed in black with cloven feet): they asked leading questions, they used sleep deprivation, they made false promises to witches, and finally if these failed they urged respected clergymen to put pressure on witches to confess.[21] Interrogators asked witches the following leading questions to help them confess "you have four imps have you not?", "did not you send such an Impe to kill my child?"[22] Those who remained obstinate in their resolution not to confess were kept awake for two or three nights. If they became tired and attempted to lie down or assume any resting position they were immediately picked up and walked about till their feet blistered or they admitted defeat by confessing.[23] Some were also kept away from food and drink.[24] Interrogators also made false promises to the witches to get them to confess by promising to set them free if they confessed.[25] If all previous attempts failed to procure a confession, as a final resort, clergymen and divines were summoned to talk to the accused in order to convince them of their malice, sinfulness and the deceitful

ways of the devil, all in the hope that they would feel remorse and sorrow and finally confess.[26]

Between 1649 and 1650 there was a second epidemic of witch-hunting in the north of England in Berwick and Newcastle.[27] In July, 1649 the guild of Berwick invited a famed "witch pricker" from Scotland, whose name was not recorded, to come to Berwick to discover witches by searching their bodies for "witch's marks". Extant local sources indicate upon whose order the witch-finder was to be engaged: "[a]tt a private Guild there, holden the 30th day of July ... before the Right Worshipful Andrew Crispe, Esq., Maior, Mr Stephen Jackson, Alderman, and the rest of the Guild-brethren. Ordered, that according to the Guild's desire, the man which tryeth the witches in Scotland shall be sent for, and satisfaction to be given him by the Towne in defraying his charges, and in coming hither, and that the town shall engage that no violence be offered by any person within the towne."[28] Through this process he was able to jail thirty women although whether any were later executed is not known.[29] In March the following year, the same witch-finder was invited by Newcastle magistrates to search out witches there. The contract between the witch-finder and the town of Newcastle gave him free passage and twenty shillings for every witch he discovered.[30] When the Scottish witch catcher arrived the magistrates sent a bellman through the town "... ringing his Bell, and crying, All people that would bring in any complaint against any woman for a Witch, they should be sent for and tryed by the person appointed."[31] Thirty women were rounded up at the town

hall.[32] There the suspected witches were stripped naked to the waist and their clothes lifted and pulled over their heads enabling the witch-finder easy access to pierce their thighs with a pin in order to determine whether the pricked spot bled or was insensitive to pain. In this manner he found 27 women guilty of witchcraft of whom 14 women and one man were later executed.[33] For a short while the witch-finder continued his activities in the North but a tide of opposition was rising against him and he skipped back to Scotland, where he was duly tried and executed. It was argued that if he stayed any longer "... he would have made most of the women in the North Witches, for mony."[34]

In their authoritative studies on English witchcraft Thomas and Macfarlane assert that the persecution of witches was carried out predominantly by members of the yeomen class. This is partially true. If we look at the printed court records of this period we can clearly see that the prosecuting witnesses were almost always yeomen.[35] A prosecuting witness being a "... private person upon whose complaint or information a criminal accusation is founded and whose testimony is mainly relied on to secure a conviction at the trial. In a more particular sense, [it is] the person who was chiefly injured, in person or property ... and who instigates the prosecution and gives evidence."[36] Furthermore, the grand juries were overwhelmingly drawn from among yeomen.[37] Thus it was the yeomen who initiated the legal process against witches and determined whether there was sufficient evidence to warrant a judgment. Yet, this is not the whole picture.

From the two witch panics we have investigated, we can safely establish that the parish and county gentry also took action against witchcraft offenders; the very wealthiest elites were little involved.[38] Not infrequently the parish gentry served as prosecuting witnesses, or informants eager to supply information against those suspected of witchcraft. More importantly, they and the county gentry filled the offices of the magistrates, justices of the peace, and justices of assize.[39] Magistrates, in particular, due to the great power and respect they commanded within a community, could easily persuade juries of the dangers of witchcraft and the need to eliminate it.[40] These attitudes of antipathy towards witchcraft were also shared by some of the assize judges.[41] Apart from the magistrates the influence of the clergy who themselves were convinced believers in witchcraft was also significant: "[t]heir role enabled them to interfere at any and every stage of the process. The minister might encourage the prosecutors, advise the examining magistrates, participate in the trial and exhort the convicted to confession and repentance."[42] But it was especially in the pulpit where the clergymen exercised their power by preaching moving sermons in which they instilled fear of witches in their listeners and goaded them to take action against them that they had their greatest impact.

But what kind of power and status did the witch accusers hold as a group? In order to gain a perspective of their power we must locate them within the national and village hierarchy. It is with difficulty that we try to define the social hierarchy of early modern England, mainly because the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

were years of great change. Traditionally, however, until 1640 descriptions of social rankings have been based on a two-tiered system, those who were gentlemen and those who were not. While vagrants, farm labourers, husbandmen and lesser craftsmen fit easily in the non-gentlemen category, the descriptions of the more substantial yeomen and great town merchants become problematic. They fit neither of the two categories and form an intermediate class. The upper classes were subdivided into three layers: the parish gentry at the bottom, followed by the county gentry, with the hundred or so members of the titular peerage forming the top layer who had a national presence. As a group, the witch accusers appear to be of little significance in the national hierarchy. Yet within their own villages they were the governing and powerful elites.[43] The village hierarchy, according to Wrightson and Levine's study of Terling, was composed of four groups. At the very bottom were the vagrants and farm labourers, next came the husbandmen and craftsmen, followed by yeomen and then the gentry.

As a group, those who worked to eliminate witches, mainly the yeomanry and the lesser and county gentry, were comprised of the very powerful and influential members of the parish community. Yeomen are usually defined as farmers worth over 40 pounds a year.[44] The lesser gentlemen were "...mostly small landed proprietors but also in part professional men, civil servants, lawyers, higher clergy, and university dons. Above them were the county elite - many of the esquires and nearly all the knights and baronets, titular categories which expanded enormously in

numbers in the early seventeenth century and which in purely economic terms have an awkward tendency to merge into one another."[45] They were regarded with highest respect by virtue of their wealth and status and they ruled their communities by the posts they held in local and shire administration. The gentry held such offices as justices of the peace and deputy-lieutenants, while the yeomen served as high constables of hundreds.[46] In the eyes of their poorer neighbours they were the people who administered justice, decided parish affairs, controlled the land, employment and poor relief.[47] Their power, wealth and status made them conscious of themselves as a group dividing them from the poorer sort.[48]

Some Economic Explanations of Witch-Hunts

But why were they apprehensive about the crime of witchcraft? We can try to answer that question by examining the communities in England where witch trials took place and the impact economic forces had on them. The number of agricultural regions in England is inordinately large. Nevertheless broadly speaking and with much oversimplification agricultural historians argue that it is possible to classify England into two basic agricultural regions the north west and the south east. The topographical differences between the two regions lead agricultural historians to identify the dominant farming systems and patterns of settlement adhered to in each area. Most of the land in the north west districts was suited for growing grass restricting the farmers to a farming system that was dominantly pastoral. Here,

farmers were preoccupied primarily with grazing sheep or cattle, a job they easily combined with other related tasks such dairying, rural industries and only to a lesser extent crop raising.[49] Most of the farms in this region were enclosed and the unit of settlement consisted of either the hamlet or the single farmstead standing apart in a scattered pattern. The dispersed settlements and enclosed lands made the enforcement of order difficult.[50] The land in the south east districts by contrast was most fertile and best suited for growing corn freeing the farmers to practice a farming system that was predominantly arable. Here, the farmers had unlimited possibilities to select between growing crops, raising livestock or any combination of the two.[51] In some areas farmers were also able to engage in rural industries which grew up around major market centres. Most of the land lay in commons and the unit of settlement consisted of nucleated villages tightly controlled by the manor and the parish.[52]

In point of fact England does not lend itself to be neatly and definitively divided between north west and south east regions, the south east region which fell under the major arable division had exceptional islands of pastoral country.[53] This is especially true of counties where the witch trials prevailed. Although the counties fit into the arable part of the division, most had pockets of pastoral country which possessed features usually associated with the north west, it was in the pastoral districts of these arable regions that witch trials predominated with such tenacity and severity. The witch trials that took place between the years 1640-1660, in the south

east region of England notably were mostly confined to the counties which made up East Anglia.[54] The witch-finder Matthew Hopkins and his associates searched out witches in Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, Kent and Bedfordshire while the professional "witch pricker" from Scotland was busy discovering witches in Northumberland.[55](Figure 1)

In a study such as this, where statistical analysis of geographic distribution of witchcraft accusations could not have been undertaken, we were forced to make use of secondary sources and indirect evidence to try and prove the thesis that witches were most numerous in the pastoral districts. In his doctoral dissertation Adrian Pollock discovered that witches were prevalent in the Weald region of Kent, where the primary farming system was pastoral.[56] In an essay entitled "The Taming of the Scold" David Underdown quoted John Aubrey's study of witchcraft which also supports the conclusion that in Dorset, Somerset, and Wiltshire by far the majority of witches were found in the pastoral districts of the counties.[57] Joan Thirsk's article entitled "Industries in the Countryside" was invaluable in helping us make connections between the facts we uncovered and pastoral regions. Thirsk argued that rural industries grew up under special circumstances not entirely to do with geography or market demand.[58] In Kent, Suffolk, and Wiltshire rural industries flourished in populous regions where farmers carried on pastoral farming in conjunction with dairying.[59] Factors such as evidence that a large number of witches were spinsters, and that they were frequently accused of injuring sheep and

spoiling the production of cheese and butter serves as further suggestion that witches were more numerous in pastoral districts. Finally, having noted the connection between rural industries and pastoral regions, Alan Macfarlane's case study of witchcraft in Essex serves as the last strong indication. He found that nearly all cloth making communities had witches.[60]

In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth century all of England's numerous regions and the traditional social structure were being noticeably transformed by the twin influence of rapid demographic expansion and inflation. In their extensive study of population in England, between 1541 and 1871, Wrigley and Schofield subdivided the demographic changes of the modern period into three phases: in the first phase, 1539 to 1639, the population increased steadily, in the second phase, 1640 to 1709, it stabilized, and during the third phase, 1710 to 1873, the population started to swell once again.[61] In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, then, the population of England jumped from 2.5 million to 5.3 million.[62] The unprecedented rise in prices was the other force which embraced England. Between 1500 and 1620, the average price of foodstuffs multiplied sixfold while the wages of labourers only tripled.[63] These demographic and inflationary pressures precipitated many changes in the arable and pastoral regions. Enclosure, the putting an end to all common rights, and engrossing, the amalgamation of several farms into one, were some of the processes that took place throughout the regions.[64] Emigration of poor people was discouraged and controlled in the arable regions

whereas the pastoral districts absorbed a disproportionate number of poor people mainly because their economies offered the poor marginal employments making it possible for them to piece together a living with little or no land.[65] One result of the economic forces that were more pronounced in the pastoral districts was the increasing polarization between the wealthy and the poor.[66] The landed classes, including the county and parochial gentry, and the yeomanry saw their economic fortunes steadily rising, their status greatly improved as a direct result of the economic pressures.[67] Labourers, on the other hand, consisting of husbandmen, wage workers and vagrants saw their standard of living falling especially if they relied primarily on wages to subsist.[68]

Of the people inhabiting the pasture districts and its smaller subdivision, the woodland tracts, contemporaries painted a highly negative picture. In the eyes of the governing elites the disorderly, stubborn, independent and lawless temperaments of these peoples made it difficult for parish notables to govern them. Given the expanding population of squatters and vagabonds, persons who were masterless, highly mobile and very poor, the propertied classes became increasingly anxious about keeping the lower orders peaceful and subordinate.[69] Their widespread fears of a "crisis of order" had some basis in popular tumults such as grain and anti-enclosure riots, and riots against draining of fens.[70] Dearth also provoked the landless poor into pilfering and general disorder.[71]

Order was once enforced through personal relationships between landlords and tenants, masters and servants, servants who became disruptive or engaged in inappropriate behaviour were punished by their master.[72] In pastoral regions, in the absence of tight manorial control, the maintenance of proper family relationships became the strongest mechanism of social control. To contemporaries like William Gouge, the author Of Domesticall Duties, the family was a microcosm of society and the relationships among family members mirrored those in political society.[73] The structure of relationships in the household closely followed a monarchy: the father was the head, the mother his inferior helpmate, while the children were one step ahead of household servants in the hierarchy.[74] The relationship between husband and wife was most important for if husband and wife lived in discord or did not maintain the proper superior and inferior relationship, some contemporaries claimed the whole social order would disintegrate.[75] Writers of manuals for householders could not agree on the exact relationship between husband and wife. Some argued that "[t]he husband ruled, the wife yielded .... the wife 'helped' the husband, 'for he is the prince and chief ruler; she is the associate' ..."[76]. Not all writers endowed the father with God-like authority over his wife and children, nevertheless, however hard it was to define the delicate position of the wife in regards to her husband, in the end, all writers on family concurred that the wife must be obedient to her husband.

The Victims of Witch-Hunts

Contemporary writers of pamphlets and tracts on witchcraft noted that witches were almost always women.[77] In fact one of the proverbs at the time said "[m]ore women, more witches".[78] Historians who have studied witchcraft by analyzing quantitatively court records have shown that in Essex 92 per cent, and in Kent 91 per cent of those accused of witchcraft were women.[79] Besides being overwhelmingly female, witches were also distinguishable by several other characteristics one of which was their social status. Witches were generally discovered from amongst the lower classes, being especially spinsters, widows and the wives of poor farm labourers.[80] Besides these characteristics witches were usually older women, between the ages of fifty and seventy, who were in possession of what was said to have been a disagreeable personality.[81]

The regions where witch trials flourished were conterminous with areas, according to Underdown and Amussen, where women had more independence. In his essay on the "The Taming of the Scold", Underdown found a connection between pastoral regions and an overwhelming preoccupation there with the problems caused by scolding women.[82] In the same breath, Amussen argues that because women were more involved in the money economy in pastoral districts, therefore their status was much higher in pastoral economies as opposed to arable ones.[83] Witch-hunts seem to have been part of this process of attack on their status. The argument we

are trying to make is best summarized in a play written by Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome entitled The Lancashire Witches (1634). In the play the trouble began with the wife of Mr Generous, who started to behave independently travelling abroad and concealing it from her husband. Soon afterwards the whole county is turned upside down, when wives begin to rule their husbands and servants their masters. They must be all bewitched laments a bewildered character of the play. According to its narrator witches and their magic were at the root of all evil, specifically they were responsible for inverting familial and social norms. When at the end of the play the witches are brought to justice the whole county returns to the right side up once again.[84] Historians specializing in the field of women's history have discerned a steady decline in the status of women from the medieval period, when women enjoyed a fair amount of economic independence, to the eighteenth century when they practically lost it.[85]

To see the growing diminishment of women's status we must begin with their position in the Middle Ages. In order to understand their role in medieval times it is crucial to study women within the family context because it was in the household where most of the agricultural and industrial production took place.[86] Women's economic productivity was essential and significant, their labour supplied their families with food, beverages, clothing and medicine.[87] Although, work in the medieval period was carried out according to a sexual division of labour where wives worked within and husbands worked without the household, the housewife necessarily

had the knowledge of the work her husband did.[88] The division of labour between the sexes was never strictly enforced because it was disadvantageous to do so.[89] In order to carry out their housewifely duties effectively women had to be free to move about in public and to combine household and non-household activity.[90] "Clerics likened the housewife to the turtle: when she went beyond her doors in pursuit of her housewifely duties, she carried her house about her like a shell 'without' which she never stepped."[91] Thomas Smith explained the running of a household at its best in 1545, when he said that the household should resemble an aristocracy not a monarchy "authority and obedience within the household," he went on, "should be assigned on the basis of skill, not gender."[92]

The working and family lives of women, in early modern England, were affected differently by the economic forces mentioned earlier, depending on the social class to which they belonged, their place of residence and the stage they were at in a life-cycle.[93] According to Susan Amussen and Susan Cahn, historians specializing in the historical study of women, women of the "middling class" inhabiting arable regions saw their productive capacities diminish.[94] Many contemporary observers without perceiving the reasons why noticed women's failure to perform their traditional tasks which led them to degrade women's work even further.[95] Historians of women argue that women's status declined because they lost important productive activities. For instance, some of the productive activities in which women engaged were removed from the household into the public sphere

while other occupations in the non-household sphere previously open to women were now closed. For example, dairying was one of the primary ways in which wives earned extra money to help out with their household subsistence.[96] However, argues Cahn, when it became apparent that dairying had the potential of becoming a profitable business wives lost control of it and men took over. The same thing happened to brewing. Brewing changed from a task girls learned at their mother's knee to a skilful trade controlled by guilds.[97] The requirement of skill and families' unwillingness to support their daughters learning these skills forced women out of the trade. Amussen charted the long-range changes in the work patterns of a small percentage of women, namely yeomen's wives, and found evidence in wills that supports her thesis that the market or exchange value of housewives' economic productivity was diminishing. Whereas previously wives and husbands worked hand in hand by the time seventeenth century rolled around housewives worked at different tasks from their husbands and as a result of this they lost skills and status.[98] One further effect of this was that their work became defined as their exclusive domain and eventually the sexual division of labour became rigidly enforced.[99] The same economic changes were also responsible for eroding the housewives's role in her husband's trade. Slowly wives started working within the private sphere principally, performing much needed and strenuous labour that went unpaid, unrecognized and was associated with low status. This new economic role which engaged women mainly inside the home became the ideal to which women were expected to aspire.

The same economic changes had a positive effect on the status of lower class women because women living in pastoral regions could benefit from many by-employments.[100] We do not mean to paint the working lives of lower class women in rosy hues. The jobs they held were low-paying and located at the lower end of the economic scale.[101] Poor women worked at the following jobs: domestic service, spinning, selling small wares and nursing. Poor married women also worked in retail trade where they were ale-wives and fish-wives.[102] Still, these by-employments were of considerable importance, because women working for pay acquired the means to earn their own subsistence, which was the true test of independence. Furthermore, the labourer wife's engagement in these countless industries often raised the family's standard of living.[103] It appears that women working in the pastoral regions were more independent than those in the arable regions. For example, in the pastoral village of Stow Bardolph labourers who left wills handed down everything to their wife. This shows the wife's importance to the family economy and her ability to carry on the work needed to sustain the home even in the absence of her husband.[104] Because lower class women had to integrate market and domestic activities they thus enjoyed more freedom from the restrictions of the household.[105] What did change for lower class women was that the economic role of the "middling class" women became the norm according to which the behaviour of all women was judged. The new model demanded that lower class women should also assume subordinate roles within the family even though their contributions to the family budget were equal to that of their husbands. A subordinate role was unacceptable

to many of those women in view of their contributions.[106] Hence the role of lower class women was in tension with the dominant and prescribed view.

As noted earlier the majority of women accused of witchcraft were listed as spinsters.[107] This fact has been dismissed by historians who tried to dismiss a link between witchcraft and the cloth industry because the occupations listed in court records do not include any weavers. Yet witches were mostly women, and women worked in the cloth industry as spinners and not weavers. Indeed there are no records of women weavers in the seventeenth century. This omission more than anything must be attributed to the confusion about the meaning of the word spinster. In medieval times the term clearly referred to a woman who spun to earn her living. However, the term also gained its modern connotation of a woman never married around this time.[108] In the court records of Essex and Kent, witches were described as spinsters only, while others were listed as being married and spinsters or being widowed and spinsters at the same time.[109] It is impossible for a woman to be married and single at the same time and unlikely that contemporaries would have made so many mistakes in recording their marital status. Therefore, one must conclude that the term spinster refers to a woman who spun for a living. Two reasons, in particular, explain why spinners would be persecuted; first, their low paying jobs were a source of independence making these women less likely to accept their husband's undisputable authority. Second, in times of economic hardship, women workers were resented by men as competitors for jobs.

The local elites had power to legislate regarding work. This is especially true if we look at some of the policies of that time giving men preference over women when it came to jobs. The authorities made it a priority that married men be hired over single men because they had a family to support, while all men were to be hired in preference to women.[110] By helping to provide married men with jobs they allowed these men to assume the proper role of a master in his own home. Lower wages for equal work and sex discrimination in hiring created wives dependent on their husbands. In the minds of the governing elites, the proper relation between husband and wife was thus reinforced.[111] Lay and clerical writers denied that women could provide for themselves because they knew an economically independent women would not quietly accept a subordinate position in the family.[112] Because jobs were closely associated with social hierarchy, changes in male/female roles were perceived as threatening by male contemporaries. Spinners, however, played a big part in textile production and their work was regarded as equal to that of a man.[113] Opportunities in rural industries rendered women independent.[114]

Women working for pay would be especially resented in times of hardship as they were competing with men for scarce jobs. In fact, some students of women's history have noted a conflict between men and women involved in the cloth industry at this time. Although previously women had played an important role in textiles and other crafts,[115] in the seventeenth and sixteenth century women were barred from skilled trades, in particular trades like weaving.[116] Besides taking over weaving,

men also consciously barred women from practising it. Weavers took deliberate steps to stop the threatening competition from women. Some records are extant that show weavers petitioning the king to bar women from practising the trade under the pretence that women were too weak to operate looms.[117] Secondly, weavers complained that there was not enough work to employ both women and men.[118] However, spinning, a low-skill and low-paying job, remained the province of women.[119]

In terms of population a disproportionate percentage of women, in Essex 42 per cent, who were persecuted for witchcraft were widows.[120] Widows were perceived as threatening in two ways. First they lived without male authority and that in early modern England was a sign of unruliness. Second, if the widow worked and was able to earn an income she threatened order according to the image of what it meant to be a woman. The clergy emphasized the point that outside of marriage there was no place for women by closing nunneries and prescribing wifehood and motherhood as the only vocation available to women.[121] Hence her presence in the community would be feared because it was unnatural. Wright found widows working in trades like retail of food and ale; they also held such jobs as pawn-brokers and money lenders.[122] Economic conditions made jobs scarce and it is not likely that at such times competition from women would have been tolerated.[123] Wright suggests that when the population increased, women were forbidden to work: and when population declined then women were encouraged to work.[124]

Conclusion

In this chapter we have identified the group of people involved in the persecution of witches as consisting of the middle and lower gentry and the yeomanry and we have also shown that their anxiety with respect to witches stemmed mainly from economic changes which were transforming the countryside. Inflation and expansion of the population resulted in further and more pronounced polarization between the wealthy and the poor. This effect was far more pronounced in the pastoral regions as opposed to arable ones. The two witch-hunts, which took place between 1640 and 1660, were confined to the south east region in which the farming system was predominantly arable but wherein the areas had several districts that were pastoral in their farming system. It was there, in the pockets of pastoral country, that witches were being discovered with such frequency. In the pastoral districts the rapid growth of population, which very often increased the numbers of vagrants and other masterless workers in the local areas coupled with poverty alarmed the propertied classes, who worried about a crisis of order. The parish elites tried to enforce order in two ways: by providing jobs and thus masters, and by their ideology of the family as an ordered hierarchy, with the father as its head followed by the mother, children and the servants. Witchcraft offenders were women from the lower classes who were also independent, such as spinsters - women who were self-reliant, widows - women who were self-governing, and wives of farm labourers - many of whom were employed in the public sphere. These women were considered

threatening to the existing order. The argument that the women persecuted had some autonomy is further supported by the fact that witches were hunted down in areas that were generally known for being places where women were more independent, according to Underdown and Amussen. From medieval times, when women enjoyed more freedom and their work had higher value, to the early modern period the status of middle class women declined, their work was now being more closely associated and restricted to the household. These new roles women gained and contemporary observers derided became the new norm by which all women were judged. Therefore to a large extent the persecution of independent women for witchcraft was about keeping women in rank and file so as to uphold order and patriarchal values.

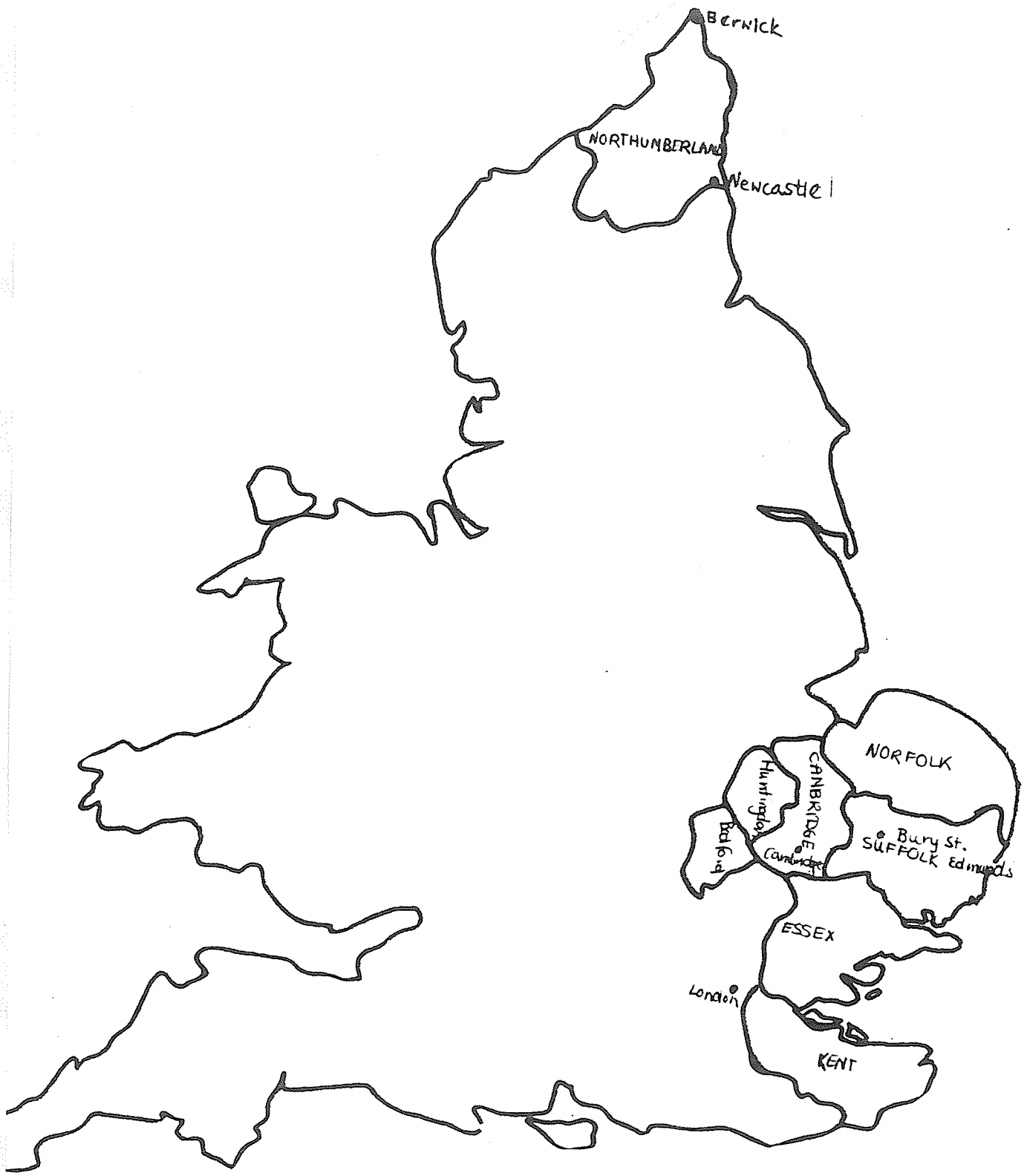

Figure 1 Counties afflicted with witch trials during the 1645-47 and 1649-50 witch-hunts

Endnotes

1.Adrian Pollock, "Regions of Evil: A geography of Witchcraft and Social Change in early Modern England" (Ph. D. diss., University of Michigan, 1977), 10; Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England, (London: Weindenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 537.

2.Wallace Notestein, A History of Witchcraft in England. From 1558 to 1718, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), 208. This work contains an extensive summary of every witch trial that took place in England in the times specified, chapters 8 and 9 cover our period.

3.Ibid., 177.

4.Richard Baxter, The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits, (london: C. Parkhust and T. Salsbury, 1691), 52; Matthew Hopkins, The Discovery of Witches, with an introduction by David Ryan (London: Printed for R. Royston, 1645; repr., n.p. Partizan Press, 1988), v. Accounts of his early life are based on speculation. Matthew Hopkins was born in 1621; he was the son of a Minister of Great Wnham by the name of James Hopkins. It is argued that Hopkins studied law and was working in the legal profession though there is no agreement as to whether he actually was a lawyer. Richard Deacon, Matthew Hopkins: Witch Finder General (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1976) In this work is contained Hopkin's biography and a summary of all the witch trials he took part in.

5.Ronald Holmes, Witchcraft in British History (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1974), 140; Rosemary Ellen Guiley, The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft (New York: Facts on File, 1989), 276. In the encyclopedia, a pricker is defined as someone who unmasks witches by searching their bodies for insensible spots. Witches were undressed and then their bodies were searched for witch's marks, and when found these blemishes were pricked with pins and needles to see whether these spots bled.

6.John Stearne, A Confirmation and Discovery of Witchcraft (London: Printed by William Wilson, 1648; repr., University of Exeter: Published by the Rota, 1973), A2.

7.Christina Hole, Witchcraft in England (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1945), 1; Stearne, 11; Holmes, 135.

8.Alan Macfarlane, Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England. A Regional and Comparative Study (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), 62; Holmes, 50; Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz eds., Becoming Visible Women in European History (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977), 130; Christina Larner, Witchcraft, Religion: the Politics of Popular Belief, edited and with a foreward by Alan Macfarlane (New York: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1984), 71.

9.Notestein, 195. In his study of witchcraft, Notestein quoted another contemporary by the name of James Howell, who wrote in 1648 that "within the compass of two years, near upon three hundred Witches were arraign'd and the major part esecuted in Essex and Suffolk only."

10.Hopkins, 11.

11.Rossell Hope Robbins, The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology (New York: Crown Publishers Inc., 1959), 253.

12.Francis Hutchinson, An Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft with Observation upon Matters of Fact (London: R. Knaplock and D. Midwinter, 1720), 82; Notestein, 181; Deacon, 163.

13.Hutchinson, 86; Hopkins, iii; A True Relation of the Araignment of Eighteene Witches. That Were Tried, Convicted, and Condemned, at a sessions at St. Edmundsbury in Suffolke... (London: Printed by J.H., 1645), Thomason Tracts, Microfilm: 1-8.

14.Stearne, 15.

15.Robbins, 492.

16.Clive Holmes, "Popular Culture? Witches, Magistrates, and Divines in Early Modern England" in Understanding Popular Culture ed. by Steven L. Kaplan, Studies in the Social Sciences (Berlin: Mouton Publishers, 1984): 85-111; Robert Filmer, An Advertisement to the Jury-Men of England, Touching Witches (1653) in Robert Filmer, Free-Holders Grand Inquest (London: Printed for Rich. Royston, 1684) micro-fiche, 309-331.

17.Robbins, 552; Hopkins, 5; Holmes, 139; Notestein, 202; Guiley, 388.

18.Robbins, 553; Stearne, 43.

19.Stearne, 45.

20.Robbins, 100.

21.Stearne, 9; Helen Berger, "Witchcraft and the Domination of Women: The English Witch Trials Reconsidered" (Ph.D. Diss., New York University, 1983), 45; Hopkins, 13.

22.Hopkins, 8.

23.Holmes, Witchcraft in British History, 136; Macfarlane, 140; Notestein, 167; Hopkins, 6; Thomas Ady, A Candle in the Dark (London: Printed for Robert Ibbiton, 1655), 101, microfiche.

24.Stearne, 13.

25.Hopkins, 7.

26.Ibid., 9.

27.Notestein, 206.

28.As quoted in C. L'Estrange Ewen, Witch Hunting and Witch Trials. The Indictments for Witchcraft from the Records of 1373 Assizes held for the Home Circuit A.D. 1557-1736 (London: Kegan Paul, 1929; a facsimile reprint, London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1971), 69 from Guild Hall Book, 1643-51, f. 134. Printed in History of Berwick, by John Fuller, 155; Notestein, 207.

29.Notestein, 207. According to Notestein, some of the witches confessed to be helping out Cromwell at the battle of Preston. These confessions likely helped their case in that few if any of the witches were executed.

30.Notestein, 206.

31.Ralph Gardiner, England's Grievance Discovered in Relation to the Coal Trade (London: n.p., 1655), 108, microfiche.

32.Notestein, 208.

33.Gardiner, 108.

34.Ibid., 109.

35.Ewen, 220-252, 291-314.

36.Henry Black Campbell, Black's Law Dictionary, Fifth Edition (St. Paul Minn.: West Publishing Co., 1979), 1099.

37.Campell, 1099; Wrightson and Levine, 105, 150; Keith Wrightson, "Two Concepts of Order: Justices, Constables and Jurymen in Seventeenth-Century England" in John Brewer and John Styles, eds., An Ungovernable People, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980), 27.

38.David Underdown, Revel, Riot, and Rebellion. Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 20-27; Barry Coward, The Stuart Age. A History of England 1603-1714 (London: Longman, 1980), 35-81; Keith Wrightson and David Levine, Poverty and Piety in an English Village. Terling, 1525-1700, Studies in Social Discontinuity (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 104-150; Lawrence Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1965), 21-119. The information in the following three paragraphs relies heavily on these sources.

39.A True and Exact Relation of the Severall Informations, Examinations, and Confessions of the Late Witches, Arraigned and Executed in the County of Essex (London: Printed for Henry Overton and Benj. Allen, 1645), 13, 18.

40.Holmes, "Popular Culture?", 88.

41.Ibid., 91.

42.Ibid., 92.

43.Ewen, 27.

44.Underdown, Revel, Riot and Rebellion, 10.

45.Stone, 51.

46.Underdown, Revel, Riot and Rebellion, 10.

47.Coward, 40; Wrightson and Levine, 106, 109.

48.Underdown, Revel, Riot and Rebellion, 20.

49.Underdown Revel, Riot and Rebellion, 5; Joan Thirsk, ed., The Agrarian History of England and Wales, volume 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 12.

50.Thirsk The Agrarian History, 6.

51.Ibid., 2-3.

52.Ibid., 8.

53.Ibid., 15.

54.R. Trevor Davis, Four Centuries of Witch-Beliefs with Special Reference to the Great Rebellion (London: n.p., 1946; repr., New York: Benjamin Bloom Inc., 1972), 19; Notestein, 196.

55.Most of the information on Hopkin's campaign comes from his close associate John Stearne, 11; Deacon, 87-170; and extant contemporary pamphlets: J. Davenport, The Witches of Huntingdon. Their Examination and confession: Exactly Taken by his Majesties Justices of Peace for that County. Whereby Will appeare How Craftily and Dangerously the Devill Tempteth & Seizeth on Poore Soules (Lo2/on: Printed for Richard Glutterbuck, 1646); The Examination, Confession, Triall, and Execution, of Joane Williford, Joan Cariden, and Jane Hott: Who were Executed at Faversham in Kent... (n.p., 1645) Thomason Tracts, microfilm; The Lawes Against Witches, and Conjuration. And Some Brief Notes and Observations for the Discovery of Witches (London: Printed for R.W., 1645), Thomason

Tracts, microfilm; Signes and Wonders from Heaven...Likewise a New Discovery of Witches in Stepney Parish and How 20 Witches More were Executed in Suffolk this Last Assize... (London: Printed by J.H., 1645), Thomason Tracts, microfilm; A True and Exact Relation of the Severall Informations, Examinations, and Confessions of the Late Witches, Arraigned & Executed in the County of Essex... (London: Printed for Henry Overton and Benj. Allen, 1645); A True and Strange Relation of the Araignment of Eighteene Witches. That Were Tried, Convicted, and Condemend, at a Sessions at St. Edmundsbury in Suffolke... (London: Printed by J.H., 1645), Thomason Tracts, microfilm.

56.Pollock, 63, 74, 94.

57.David Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold: the Enforcement of Patriarchal Authority in Early Modern England" in Order and Disorder in Early Modern England eds. by Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 127. Although Aubrey's study was unsystematic, nevertheless, of the thirty cases of witchcraft he collected between 1600 and 1670, only five came from arable villages.

58.Joan Thirsk, "Industries in the Countryside" in F.J. Fisher ed., Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor and Stuart England (Cambridge: The University Press, 1961), 71.

59.Ibid., 75.

60.Macfarlane, 149. "Many of the centres of the cloth industry were also centres of prosecution: Bocking, Braintree, Coggeshall, Witham, Colchester and Halstead were the main centres of the new draperies. All of them witnessed prosecutions. Manningtree, Dedham, Boxted, Langham, Wivenhoe, and Horkesley were the main cloth-making towns, all except Boxted suffered accusations."

61.E.A. Wrigley and R.S. Schofield, The Population History of England 1541-1871. A Reconstruction (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 62.

62.Susan Dwyer Amussen, An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England (Oxford: n.p., 1988), 7; Wrightson and Levine, 3.

63.Amussen, 8; Wrightson and Levine, 3.

64.Thirsk The Agrarian History, 200-201.

65.Amussen, 7, 14.

66.Underdown Revel, Riot and Rebellion, 26; Wrightson and Levine, 3.

67.Gordon Batho, "The Peerage: A Declining Class?" in Thirsk ed., The Agrarian History, 280.

68.Alan Everitt, "Farm Labourers", in Thirsk ed., The Agrarian History, 408.

69.Paul A. Slack, "Vagrants and Vagrancy in England, 1598-1664" Economic History Review 27 (1974): 374-5; Amussen, 8, 123.

70.Christopher Hill, Change and Continuity in Seventeenth Century England (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), chapter 8; Susan Cahn, Industry of Devotion (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 25.

71.J. Walter and K. Wrightson, "Dearth and the Social Order in Early-Modern England" Past and Present 71 (1976): 24.

72.Cahn, 34.

73.Cahn, 126-7; Amussen, 38.

74.Cahn, 119.

75.Ibid., 127.

76.Ibid., 119.

77.Ady Thomas, A Candle in the Dark, 36; King James the First, Daemonologie and News From Scotland ed. by G.B. Harrison (n.p., 1597; repr., Edingurgh: University Press, 1966), 43; Stearne, 10.

78.John Gaule, Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcrafts (London: W. Wilson, 1646), 53.

79.Pollock, 42.

80.Thomas A Candle in the Dark, 110; Geoffrey Scarre, Witchcraft and Magi in 16th and 17th Century Europe, Studies in European History (N.J.: Humanities Press International inc., 1987), 26; Macfarlane, 164; Pollock, 54; Berger, 130.

81.Macfarlane, 161.

82.Underdown "The Taming of the Scold", 126.

83.Amussen, 69.

84.Underdown "The Taming of the Scold", 118.

85.Ibid., 122.

86.Cahn, 90.

87.Ibid., 34.

88.Ibid., 87-8.

89.Ibid., 89.

90.Ibid., 97.

91.Ibid., 157.

92.Ibid., 98.

93.Ibid., 41.

94.Chris Middleton, "Women's Labour and the Transition to Preindustrial Cpaitalism" in Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England ed. by Lindsy Charles and Lorna Duffin (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 191, 182; Louise Tilly and Joan W. Scott, Women, Work and Family (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), 3.

95.Cahn, 49.

96.Ibid., 48.

97.Ibid., 56.

98.Amussen, 85; Cahn, 47.

99.Amussen, 99.

100.Ibid., 81.

101.Middleton, 191.

102.Sue Wright, "Churchmaids, Huswyfes and Hucksters: The Employment of Women in Tudor and Stuart Saisbury" in Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England eds. by Charles Lindsey and Lorna Duffin (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 107.

103.Everitt, 429; Cahn, 168.

104.Amussen 93; Middleton, 202; Spufford, 89.

105.Middleton, 197.

106.Cahn, 168.

107.Berger, 130.

108.Ibid., 128.

109.Pollock, 43; Macfarlane, 164.

110.Cahn, 32.

111.Ibid., 31.

112.Amussen, 131.

113.Middleton, 201; Amussen, 84.

114.Michael Roberts, "Words they are Women, and Deeds They are Men: Images of Work and Gender in Early Modern England" in Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England eds. by Charles Linsdey and Lorna Duffin (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 160.

115.Amussen, 84.

116.Middletion, 202; Cahn, 51.

117.Cahn, 53.

118.Ibid., 54.

119.Ibid., 54.

120.Hutchinson, 6; Henry More, An Antidote Against Atheisme (London: Printed by Roger Daniel, 1653), 124, microfiche; Gaule, 46; Ady, 110; Scarre, 26; Pollock, 54.

121.Cahn, 136.

122.Wright, 110-111.

123.Ibid., 115.

124.Ibid., 116.

CHAPTER 3

WITCHCRAFT AND RELIGION

Within the last thirty years of English historiography on witchcraft, the debate on the role religion played in supporting the persecutions of witches ranges from those historians who contend that religion was a strong and decisive factor to those scholars who argue that its impact was more or less insignificant.

Trevor R. Davies and Hugh Redwald Trevor-Roper take different paths to assert the importance of religion. Davies argued that strongly held religious beliefs motivated zealous Puritans to seek out and destroy witches.[1] With the accession of Queen Mary to the throne, and the reinstatement of Catholicism as the established faith of the realm, many lay and clerical Puritans were forced into exile. These Marian exiles, as they have been called, settled in places such as Basle, Geneva,

Strassbourg and Zurich, which were well-known as the seedbeds of radical reformation and large-scale witch-hunts and witch burnings. After Queen Elizabeth succeeded to the throne, the Marian exiles returned home bringing with them Continental witch-beliefs and a readiness to rid their own country of Satan's servants.[2] In his essay on witch-craze in Western Europe, Trevor-Roper argued that in England as on the Continent witch trials reflected religious crisis. For example, persecutions in England began with the return of Marian exiles in the 1560's and came to life again in the 1580's and 1590's, years marked by fears of Catholic plots. Witch trials then ceased during the Thirty Years War, which did not involve England. However, when ideological and civil war came to England in the 1640's witches were persecuted once again.[3]

John Teall, Keith Thomas and Alan Macfarlane, on the other hand, argue that the religion in witchcraft accusations was not a definitive factor. According to Teall, it is inconceivable that one group, the Puritans were wholly responsible for witch persecutions because all Puritans did not think witches should be condemned and hanged.[4] The contemporary Puritans: William Perkins, George Gifford and Reginald Scot are cases in point.[5] Troubled by the harmful powers of Satan, Perkins, in his Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft (1608), pleaded that all witches must be put to death chiefly for the crime of making a covenant with the devil. A more moderate way of dealing with witches was put forward by Gifford in A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes (1593). He denounced the blind

persecution of witches; however, if witches believe that "their spirits do those harmes" they should be destroyed because they err in ascribing powers to Satan that belong only to God.[6] In his Discoverie of Witchcraft (1584), Scot protested against witch-hunting by implicitly denying the existence of witches. Thus, the comparison of Perkins, Gifford and Scot according to Teall reveals that Puritans had varied attitudes towards witch-hunting which invalidates the connection between Puritanism and the urge to hunt witches. Thomas's single most authoritative work on English witchcraft, and the case study of Essex witch trials at the village level by Macfarlane, conclude that the impact of religious change on witch trials was indirect, at best a consequence of the adoption of Protestantism in place of Catholicism.[7] The Catholic religion had provided the peasants with a safety net of psychologically consoling rituals and practices such as confession, absolution, talismans, relics, saints and the ritual of exorcism to counterattack witchcraft. Protestantism removed these superstitions. Under the new disposition a peasant suffering from misfortune who believed that his troubles were caused by witchcraft had recourse only to his faith and prayer. Protestantism argues Thomas "... forced adherents into the intolerable position of the reality of witchcraft, yet denying the existence of an effective and legitimate form of protection or cure."[8]

Some Evidence of the Impact of Religion on Witchcraft

In this chapter we want to show that religion played a significant role in the English witch trials which took place between 1640 and 1660; and that the witch

trials of this period seem to reflect a conflict between the established religion and the sects which threatened to supplant it.

Evidence that religion was a major factor in witch trials arises from three indications: one, was the requirement of evidence of a pact with the devil to prove that a person was guilty of witchcraft; two, making accusations of witchcraft against members of radical religious sects; and, three, widespread contemporary opinion linking religious dissent to witchcraft. During the Hopkins witch hunts, which we have discussed earlier, suspected witches were accused of maleficium and making a covenant with the devil. In a typical case of the Hopkins's campaign, the witch confessed to making a pact with the devil, who appeared in the shape of a man dressed in black with cloven feet. The covenant was then sealed with the witch's blood. To make the contract complete the devil supposedly required the witch to renounce her baptism, God and Christ. Witches, it was widely believed, were the servants and worshippers of the devil. Because the pact with the devil figured prominently in the witch-hunt of 1645-1647, to a large extent the witches of this period were not only malefactors but also religious apostates, in that it was believed that they served the devil.[9]

The belief that a witch made a pact with the devil was not confined to this single outbreak; rather, it was a very prominent feature of witch trials in this twenty year period, and nearly all the pamphlets we have perused make a reference to it.

We can use as an example the trial of Mrs. Anne Bodenham, a wife of an eighty-year-old clothier of Fisherton Anger in Wiltshire, which took place sometime in 1653. Although Bodenham practised some form of magic and made money by helping people recover stolen goods, she was chiefly convicted on an accusation that she made a pact with the devil and observed religious rites considered to be papistical. Anne Stiles, the maid-servant who accused Anne Bodenham of witchcraft, told the court that witch Bodenham seduced and enticed her to sign a contract with the devil, with promises of wealth and a life of ease. Both Stiles and Bodenham were interrogated; and all the questions that were posed to them were of a religious nature, indicating the deep-seated interest of the court officials in their religious beliefs. Anne Stiles made a full confession, repented, and after professing an earnest desire to serve God her life was spared. Anne Bodenham remained adamant in her resolution not to confess till the very end. Three times as she was going up the ladder to be hanged she was importuned and urged to confess and each time she refused. It appears then that Bodenham was hanged for straying from the Established Church in her religious beliefs.[10]

Although some charges of witchcraft were levelled against members of radical religious sects such as Baptists and Ranters, documentation regarding members of the society of Quakers is plentiful and conclusive. The trial of two Quakers, accused of witchcraft at Cambridge in 1659, provides the clearest evidence of the religious link. The case against them was initiated by Mary Philips, who accused the two

Quakers of bewitching her and making her fall from the Church of England so that she could enter into the Society of Friends. She also confessed to being transformed into the shape of a mare and riding in that shape to attend a nocturnal meeting of other Quakers and witches. The two Quakers were tried at the court of assize, and despite the fact that the grand jury found them guilty the judge cleared them of the witchcraft charges.[11] There are other instances of Quakers brought to court to be tried for witchcraft. For example, in 1655 in Kendal, Westmorland, John Gilpin was suspected of witchcraft as long as he associated himself with the Quakers. When he renounced the Quakers and the devil and came back to the Church of England the accusation of witchcraft was dropped.[12] Also in Dorset in 1659 several Quakers were slandered with charges of witchcraft.[13] Indeed, the belief that Quakers were guilty of witchcraft must have been widespread and deep-seated for in 1655 a pamphlet was issued, in which the Quakers vehemently denied the witchcraft allegations as untrue. In this pamphlet, Quakers called for the accusations against them to stop, for Quakers, they argued, follow the Lord as much as any other followers of God in abhorring witchcraft.[14]

When it came to making accusations against Baptists and Ranters we learn how contemporary society understood the craftiness and subtle ways of the devil. In the case of Lydia Rogers, of Wapping in Middlesex, in 1658, the devil worked in different ways to accomplish his designs. First, he drew Rogers, who used to be an honest woman and steadfast in her faith into heresy (here meaning the Anabaptists)

and then witchcraft.[15] In 1655, a seaman's wife was accused of making a pact with the devil. When her story was summarized in the newsbook Mercurius Fumigosus, for February 14-21, it was implied that she was a member of the Ranters sect. The author of this newspaper stated that "[a]t Ratliffe the last week happened an exceeding strange Accident, where a Seamans wife lying in, there came a seeming gentleman all in black to speak with her .... This is generally reported for a certain truth; and methinks should be a great terrour to Women, that never were more Proud or unfaithful to God or their Husbands, then these ranting, roaring and most disloyal times, that the devill is let loose to work mischief."[16] Although it was not stated explicitly that she was a member of this sect, we interpret ranting and roaring as referring to the sect. Besides this case, several of the prominent Ranter members were also tarred with the charge of witchcraft.[17]

Even if individual members of radical sects were not tried for witchcraft there was nevertheless a widespread belief that sectarians were guilty of witchcraft. For example, religious practices of sectarians were sometimes interpreted as witchcraft, as in the case of Quakers whose trembling and shaking behaviour was more often than not confused with "witchcraft fits".[18] The contemporary Richard Baxter (1615-91), a renowned Presbyterian minister and writer who was the last English author to defend witch-beliefs, but who was also not very tolerant of sectarians and Catholics, noted that when "... the Quakers first rose ... their Societies began like witches, with Quaking, and vomiting ..."[19] In his study of Baptists during the English Revolution

J.F. McGregor pointed out how easily contemporaries misinterpreted the religious practices of Baptists as witchcraft since Baptists like witches confess that the devil persuaded them to deny their baptism.[20] The contemporary observer Thomas Ady, in his tract on witchcraft called A Candle in the Dark (1655), tried to convince judges and other witchmongers to stop persecuting witches, calling the phenomenon of witch-hunting a delusion. In this treatise he argues that in many instances religious dissenters, be they Catholics or sectarians were accused of witchcraft. He stated "[t]his is still a common practice among the Papists to carry Charms about them (to make them shot-free) when they go to Warre ... many of the poor Idolatrous Irish Rebels being found slain with Charms in their pockets, composed by the Popish clergy the Witches of these latter times."[21] In his study of the popular fear of Catholics during the English Revolution, Robin Clifton argued that the image of the Catholic was used as a negative image against which the true religion could be judged and reaffirmed.[22] Ady made a similar argument when he noted that the Church "... under the name of Witches ... may melt away whom she feareth, or suspectdth will be opposers ..."[23] Hence to no small degree the persecution of witches was about suppressing religious deviants.

Religious Views Held by Witch Persecutors

Enough has been said to show that the accusations made against witches often disguised bitter differences of opinion about religious matters; the persecutors rigidly

upheld one set of religious beliefs and the victims yet another. In this section we will identify first the religious beliefs of the people who persecuted witches and then we will set forth their views about the place of women.

Three reasons in particular suggest that those who persecuted witches were Puritans; first, there was the geographical distribution of successful witch trials. Second was the social status of the persecutors, and finally, the Puritan clergy's identifiable participation in witch trials and their open display of attitudes towards witchcraft.

Broadly speaking, in terms of religion the Civil War divided the kingdom into two religious factions. Although to some extent every locality was divided, still there was a clear difference in the religious inclinations between the people living in the north west and the south east. In the north and west people tended to follow the Catholic faith or some form of redefined Anglicanism whereas in the south and east the Established Church such as it was was Puritan at least for the duration of the twenty year period.[24] We have observed earlier that except for Northumberland witches were persecuted mostly in the south east region. In other words witches were discovered in areas that were strongly Puritan, while the north west regions, which were Catholic or Anglican strongholds, were for the most part free of witch-hunts.[25] More specific evidence regarding the regional character of witch persecutions adds powerfully to the suggestion that witches were persecuted by and large under the

Puritan yoke. We have also noted earlier that witches were persecuted in particular in pastoral regions. According to Underdown, moderate Protestantism or Catholicism was well-suited to the arable regions, but in the pastoral regions which were plagued by problems of disorder Puritanism was the dominant force.[26] The exact same observation that the pastoral regions and cloth areas were the strongholds of Puritanism and that the people in these regions were more inclined to believe in witches was noted by one contemporary observer.[27]

Secondly, if we look closely at the social status of witch persecutors and the social base of Puritanism we will see that they coincide. Previously we identified the witch's persecutors as coming chiefly from the yeoman class and the minor and county gentry. Members of this class were generally Puritans.[28] It seems that the Puritan-minded section of the population owed its strength to the very middling sort (by whom we mean the yeomen, freeholders, and independent craftsmen) who were the bedrock of Puritanism and the gentry.[29]

Puritan clergymen served as witnesses, informants and interrogators during witch trials and their influence was enormous as evidenced in the following incident. The minister of Cackton, Essex, by the name of Joseph Long, was heard telling Elizabeth Smith, who was accused of witchcraft "... that if she were guilty of any such thing, [meaning witchcraft] He would shew some example upon her ... after [his reprobation] she shaked and quivered, and fell down to the ground backward, and

tumbled up and down upon the ground and hath continued sick ever since."[30] Perhaps the Puritan divines exercised the largest influence on other people from the pulpit and the press. The eminent Puritan divine, William Perkins (1555-1602) was not only a spiritual preacher but also the most important Puritan writer and he maintained the belief in witches.[31] His work on witchcraft, A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft, so Far Forth as it is Revealed in the Scriptures, which was published posthumously, surpassed that of King James's in popularity and was translated into several foreign languages. In this work he took a hardline approach towards witchcraft arguing for the destruction of good and evil witches and urging the use of torture in order to detect them. From the pulpit many ministers delivered sermons on the dangers of witchcraft and thus disseminated the belief in witches among wide circles of the population.[32] The Puritan clergy were respectable members of the local elites and their opinions were therefore very influential. One cannot escape the impression that the majority of witches were persecuted by people who were Puritan-minded.

Before we can go any further, we feel that it is imperative to provide a workable definition of the term Puritan. The use of the word Puritan is a matter of acute debate and any attempt to define it with precision is impossible.[33] Having acknowledged this, we can begin to put some limitations on the definition of Puritanism. Puritans were Calvinists who were dissatisfied with the Elizabethan settlement and committed themselves to press for further reforms within the

Established Church.[34] Theologically, they subscribed to the doctrines of predestination, free grace, and the belief in the notion of the elect; in other words they believed God selects those people who will be saved and damned before they are born. Equally well, to be Puritan meant to be anti-Catholic, anti-clerical and to be in possession of a strong aversion to the devil. Puritans emphasized and elevated the importance of preaching and the authority of scripture as a source for moral and spiritual guidance; at the same time they down played anything that resembled ceremony and ritual by removing from their Churches all symbols of popery such as, for instance, altar rails or images in stained glass windows.[35] Puritanism, however, was far from being a uniform movement in which all members were united in following a single dogma. Rather, Puritans were in disagreement over a wide range of religious matters such as political reforms of church government. In a nutshell, the Puritans were divided between two sides which in turn themselves were split into several subgroups. On the conservative side were the Presbyterians and Independents or Congregationalists and on the radical side were the Brownists, Separatists, Baptists and the radical civil war sects such as Quakers, Muggletonians, Millenarians, Seekers and Ranter.[36] Even though there is no consensus among historians regarding the make-up of the membership of Puritans, it can be argued that Puritans were chiefly composed of Presbyterians and Independents.[37] Although in practice themselves far from forming an undivided body the Presbyterian Church theoretically rested on Calvinist ecclesiastical principles and resisted even the slightest ecclesiastical deviation.[38] Sectarians and other Puritan groups which were

on the left were repudiated by the conservative and respected Presbyterians.[39]

The Puritan code of behaviour was applicable to state, church, household, relationships among family members and business.[40] In an age beset by many changes Puritanism offered its adherents, especially those suffering from anxieties over salvation or any other moral dilemma, courage, self-respect, confidence, discipline, order and consequently a feeling of control over their destinies. In short, it was a recipe for a successful life.[41] Among many other things Puritanism was an instrument of social control[42], useful in suppressing all sorts of instability and unruliness among the lower sections of the population.[43] Puritan ministers converted and indoctrinated people with Puritan ideals in order to teach them a moral and disciplined way of life. In this sense Puritanism effectively dealt with heresy and anarchy by imposing a strict moral code on the populace who were in turn expected to conform strictly to all prescribed Puritan observances.[44]

Since most victims of witchcraft were women, we will next look at the Puritan concept of the ideal woman. Undoubtedly, Puritanism was partially responsible for restricting the roles of women to the "hearth and home."[45] According to Puritan contemporaries, "... the virtuous woman was never a wanderer abroad but always a worker at home."[46] From the Puritan perspective, then, women's whole life should revolve around the institution they most exalted, the family; in that place her office of wife and mother was highly esteemed and appreciated. Marriage was an unequal

partnership between husband, who as the superior partner was to guide his wife in matters worldly and spiritual, and wife, who as the junior partner owed to her husband obedience and a "willing and joyous submission".[47] Although not equal, the relationship between husband and wife was not the same as that between master and slave, indeed contemporaries argued the wife was a companion of his soul and as such she should be cherished and respected.[48] The admired qualities in women were the very opposite of those admired in men; the successful man was strong, wise and active but the perfect woman was weak, intellectually inferior and passive.[49]

Women's acceptance of her submissive role within the family was important because through this patriarchal-type of family proper gender relations were maintained, as was the political and social order of society.[50] The family "... was also [a] crucial ... symbol of a hierarchical society. Functioning as both a little church and a little commonwealth, it served as a model of relationships between God and his creatures and as a model for all social relations. As husband, father, and master, to wife, children and servants, the head of the household stood in the same relationship to them as the minister did to his congregants and as the magistrate did to his subjects."[51] Within the family the relationship between husband and wife served as a symbol for relations between women and men in general.[52]

Religious Inclinations of Those Accused of Witchcraft

We have already examined several cases in which accusations of witchcraft were made against women who joined the ranks of various civil war radical religious sects.[53] First, we will examine the types of freedoms the sects offered their female members and then explore the reasons why such women were persecuted for witchcraft. When it came to defining the woman's role in Church, Puritans followed the admonition of St Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians (chapter 14, verse 34) in which the apostle stated: "Let your women keep silence in the churches for it is not permitted unto them to speak".[54] Women were altogether prohibited from participating in Church governance and preaching. If they so much as attempted to discuss Divine matters they were considered immodest. In stark contrast to the Puritan position regarding the role of women in Church, sects such as Quakers, Seekers, Ranters and Baptists enlarged the role of women by allowing them at least three prominent roles within their religious movements as preachers[55], prophetesses[56], and writers.[57] The first reference to female preachers was made in an anonymous tract entitled Discovery of Six Women Preachers (1641), which described how these women mounted " a stoole or a tub instead of pulpit" and expounded the Scriptures.[58] By contemporary standards female preachers were commonly referred to as "pratling" or "impudent huswives" because their preaching was considered to be nothing more than a venting of their own notions which arose from strong memories due to their natural volubility.[59] These women preachers

oftentimes met in private houses or even in barns where they expounded on the Scriptures to those who assembled to hear them. They preached for three or four hours at a time, and sometimes on a weekly basis.[60] In an anonymous tract it was said about a particular female preacher that she "[d]id take a Text and boldly did descant, The lawfulnesse to Preach of a She-Saint, Inform'd her Auditory, that there was More need to edifice em, than sell Lace; And that her zeale, piety and knowledge, Surpast the greatest student in the Colledge, Who Striv'd this Humane Learning to advance, She with her Bible and a Concordance. Could preach nine times a weeke, morning and night such revelations had she from new light."[61]

During the civil war women also participated in religious life as prophetesses.[62] Once again contemporary observers derided the activities of female visionaries. According to them, women did not prophecy rather they were simply gadding.[63] In her study of female prophets during the civil war, Phyllis Mack brought to light an important factor about prophetesses, namely that their revelations could be interpreted as coming either from God or the devil. For example, the prophetess from St. Ives in Huntingdonshire who excelled in extemporaneous prayer was later executed for witchcraft in New England, confirming the belief that her inspirations came from the devil.[64] According to Mack, "... women were perceived as prophets when they reinforced challenges to authority which had already been made by others, and dismissed as insane or accused of witchcraft when their statements went too far according to the political preconceptions of their

audience."[65]

Whether preachers or prophetesses many of the sectarian women took their messages into print. For example, Mrs. Chidley wrote a tract in defence of Independent Churches and about other contemporary controversial religious issues while the prophetess Elizabeth Avery poured out her prophecies in pamphlets. The most profuse writer of this period was Lady Eleanor Davies who poured out her prophecies of doom into numerous pamphlets.[66]

Besides allowing their female members to become preachers, prophets and pamphleteers the sects offered women unprecedented power in Church government.[67] Some independent congregations allowed women to vote, debate and become deaconesses.[68] Furthermore, women were allowed to vote on issues regarding the admission of new members, the choice of a new minister, and even on such matters as excommunication and absolution.[69]

Women sectarians openly displayed their religious preference through their religious behaviour. Patricia Mary Higgins provides several examples of women showing where they stood for example on issue of the use of pictures and images by smashing stained glass windows or tearing down altar rails. Other women refused to hear the common prayer and entered the Church only to hear the sermons. Women frequently accused parsons of preaching lies and some even claimed that a

parson had no more right to preach than a dog. Sectarian women opposed several Laudian practices such as the use of the cross and genuflecting. In one instance, several women assaulted a curate and used knives to cut and tear off his surplice.[70]

Contemporaries perceived the female members of religious sects such as Baptists, Brownists, Familists, Independents, Millenarians, Quakers, Ranters and Seekers as threatening the patriarchal family.[71] For example, womens' newly acquired roles as preachers or prophetesses "... conflicted with family obligations, alienating the affections of the family members towards each other, and worst of all, rending the bonds of obedience which held them together."[72] The contemporary Ralph Farmer accused Quakers of "... breaking the bonds of duty in all relations, which we evidently finde here already, Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, Magistrates and Subjects, Ministers and People."[73] By allowing women certain freedoms sectarians were blamed for placing divisions between husbands and wives, and between parents and children. In some sects women were free to choose their own religion without the consent or guidance of their husbands.[74] This in turn created the much lamented spectacle of couples where husbands and wives went to different Churches. Some contemporaries argued that this kind of separation between spouses would bring about disobedience and contempt for authority. It would invert the order of relations established by God and thus threaten the peace in families.[75] It was also widely believed that the sectarians preached that spouses may cast "unbelieving" partners aside and take new ones.

Furthermore, Brownists taught that marriage was a civil contract and not a sacrament clearing the way for divorce. Wives were also allowed to forsake their antichristian husbands.[76] Sectarian teachings also placed divisions between parents and children. One such teaching was the advanced notion that people should be free to marry for love instead of birth and portion.[77] The practice of sectarians in allowing women many rights and freedoms was a transgression against nature and scripture, both of which held that a woman is subordinate to a man. These practices, it was argued, led women to usurp the place of man and therefore transgresse the rule of nature and scripture where it was taught that a woman was inferior and subordinate to a man.[78]

Besides social order the sects also threatened church authority, religious beliefs, and property. The most frequent accusation levelled against the sects was that they tried to undermine the church.[79] Contemporaries argued, that Ranters, for example "... were hell bent upon the destruction of the commonwealth, true religion and civil society."[80] Sectarians were called "... Cranks, madmen and lunatics because they would not accept the logic of current political, economic and religious institutions, and they soon became the very image of all that was personally, morally and socially unacceptable."[81] Sects also threatened the authority of religious leaders because many sectarian leaders called the ministers anti-Christian and of no use for these days Christ himself is present in the hearts of his saints.[82] Preaching could be done by any layman besides priests were "the fountains of all wickedness

abounding in the nations. Their tithes robbed the poor ..."[83] For example, the contemporary Ralph Farmer called Ranters "Religious Villains."[84] Laurence Clarkson taught that "there is no such act as drunkenness, adultery and theft in God ... sin hath its conception only in the imagination ... what act soever is done by thee in light and love, is light and lovely, though it be that act called adultery ... No matter what Scripture, Saints or churches say, if that within thee do not condemn, thee thou shalt not be condemned."[85] Mrs. Paul Wayt agreed that Jesus Christ and Virgin Mary existed "she knew it was truth according to the history, but not according to the mystery."[86] Mrs. William Austin "looked upon the Scripture as nothing, she trampled them under her feet."[87]

Sects also threatened property "such as now introduce thou and thee will (if they can), Thomas Fuller warned in 1655, expel Mine and Thine, dissolving all property into confusion."[88] The notorious Quaker George Fox proposed that "all the great houses, abbeys, steeple-houses and whitehall should be turned into alms-houses, that monastic and glebe land should be used to support the poor, and that manorial fines should be turned over to them. He too prophesied a woe to the rich in the day of the Lord now appearing."[89]

Sectarians also threatened hierarchy through refusal of such simple gestures as the tipping of the hat or the use of "thou".[90] With these threats '[l]iterally anything seemed possible ..."[91] There was another revolution, argues Christopher

Hill, "... which never happened, though from time to time it threatened. This might have established communal property, a far wider democracy in political and legal institutions, might have disestablished the state church and rejected the protestant ethic."[92] The threat from sects was serious and had to be dealt with.

One way in which local elites could control the ungodly behaviour in women was through fear of being accused a witch. This fear felt by women served to make women conform to female roles prescribed by religion. For example, when the witch-finder Matthew Hopkins visited a town to search out witches some women of their own accord asked Hopkins to put them through a test to prove them honest women.[93] Hopkins then subjected them to a swimming test, if the woman sunk she was cleared, but if she floated she was suspected of being a witch. Other women wishing to clear their names were subjected to another test, which consisted of searching the woman's body for insensitive spots. If these marks did not bleed when a pin was driven through them the woman was suspected of witchcraft.[94] This test, warned Stearne was particularly tricky for some women when they hear of the witch-finder coming to town "... pull them out with their nails ..." or pluck them off the night before[95] so that they would not be found out. Other women still cut them off[96]; for example, Marian Hocket was so afraid of being proven a witch that she "... had cut off her bigs ..."[97] Informants against witches spoke of women "... with many teares ..." because the witch's marks were discovered on their bodies.[98] Women already suspected of witchcraft had to be extra careful. "... [T]his Informant called

to the said Mary and said, Good-wife Greenleife if your childe be asleepe, awaken it, for if anybody comes by, and heare it make such moane (you having an ill name aready) they will say, you are suckling your Impes upon it ..."[99] Womens' ungodly behaviour was also controlled through direct warnings which were disseminated through ballads, newbooks and pamphlets. One of the ballads entitled "Strange and Wonderful News" ends on the following note "It seems the Devill his bargin had, Wherefore I wish that one and all, To have a care of what they do, and to take warning by her fall."[100] Joan Williford who was executed for witchcraft in 1645, bid her fellow women the following farewell: "... desired all good people to take warning by her, and not to suffer themselves to be deceived by the Divell, neither for lucre of money, malice, or any thing else, as she had done: but, to sticke fast to God, for if she had not first forsaken god, god would not have forsaken her."[101]

Conclusion

In this chapter we have endeavoured to show that religion was a contributing factor in the persecution of witches. Oftentimes below the surface of witchcraft accusations lay disguised conflicting religious beliefs. The witch persecutors were Puritan while the religious orientation of the victims of witchcraft accusations was tied to anyone of the many civil war radical religious sects. Female membership in radical religious sects threatened family order and church authority because the sects

were much more generous in their view of the role of women in church and society. Alarmed by this threat posed by these religious deviants the local elites used the images of the witch to put women back in their place and thus at the same time they reaffirmed the established religious beliefs and womens' rightful place. We have showed that some women who were Quakers or Anabaptist were accused of witchcraft. Their accusation served as an exemplery punishment of what happens to women who step outside their prescribed role. Given a context of uncertain religious environment, witchcraft served as an expedient way of punishing deviants in order to keep the social structure and order intact.

Endnotes

1.Trevor R. Davies, Four Centuries of Witch-Beliefs: With Special Reference to the Great Rebellion (London, 1964; reprint, New York: Benjamin Bloom Inc., 1972), 73.

2.Ibid., 16.

3.Hugh Redwald Trevor-Roper, The European Witch-Craze of the 16th and 17th Centuries (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969), 90, 67.

4.John L. Teall, "Witchcraft and Calvinism in Elizabethan England", Journal of the History of Ideas XXIII (1962): 22.

5.Ibid., 34.

6.Ibid., 31.

7.Alan Macfarlane, Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study (London: Routledge & Kagan Paul, 1970), 189.

8.Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 590.

9.John Stearne, A Confirmation and Discovery of Witches, 12-13, 20, 31. In his pamphlet Stearne lists numerous instances of witches making a pact with the devil in the shape of man dressed in black with cloven feet. Matthew Hopkins, in his pamphlet The Discovery of Witches, quotes a passage from King James's Demonology to the effect that "...it is a certain rule, for (saith I) Witches deny thier baptisme when they covenant with the devill..."(p:7), to prove that witches are the servants of the devil.

10.Edmond Bower, Dr. Lamb revived, or Witchcraft Condemn'd in Anne Bodenham... (London: Printed for Richard Biest and John Place, 1653), 1-40; "The Salisbury Assizes. Or the Reward of Witchcraft. Being a True Relation of Mistress Bodnam Living in Fisheron..." in Hyder E. Rollins, Cavalier and Puritan (New York: The New York University Press, 1913), 329-335; Notestein, A History of Witchcraft in England. From 1558 to 1718, 210-213; The Faithful Scout, (Sept. 9-16, 1653; July 15-22, 1089): 1089-1090; John Ashton, The Devil in Britain and America (Ann Arbor: Gryphon Books, 1971), 249-254; C. L'Estrange Ewen, Witchcraft and Demonianism (London: Heath Cranton Limited, 1933); 324-329.

11.Strange and Terrible News From Cambridge, Being A True Relation of the Quakers Bewitching of Mary Philips... (London: C. Brooks, 1659), 1-12.

12.John Gilpin, The Quakers Shaken: Or a Fire-Brand Snach'd Out of the Fire Being a Briefe Relation of Gods Wonderful Mercie extended to John Gilpin... (London: Printed by Simon Waterson, 1653), 1-14; Ralph Farmer, The Great Mysteries of Godlinesse and Ungodlinesse (London: William Ballard, 1655), 81-87.

13.Barry Reay, The Quakers and the English Revolution, foreword by Christopher Hill (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 68.

14.R. Farnsworth, Witchcraft Cast Out From the Religious Seed and Israel of God and the Black Art (London: Printed for Giles Calvert, 1655), 16.

15.The Snare of the Devill Discovered: or, A True and Perfect Relation of Lydia the Wife of John Rogers House-Carpenter, Living in Greenbank... (London: Printed for Edward Thomas, 1658), 1-12; Notestein, 365, 411.

16."Strange and Wonderfull News of a Woman which Lived Neer unto the Famous City of London, Who Had Her Head Torn off from Her Body by the Divell....", in Hyder E. Rollins, Cavalier and Puritan (New York: The New York University Press, 1922), 372-378.

17.J.C. Davis, Fear, Myth and History: The Ranters and the Historians (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 28.

18.Reay, 71.

19.Richard Baxter, The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (London: C. Pankist & J. Salsbury, 1691), 175; Robbins, 44-45; C.P. Hill, Who's Who in History, volume 3, England 1603 to 1714 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 188-190.

20.J.F. McGregor and B. Reay eds., Radical Religion in the English Revolution (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 41.

21.Thomas Ady, A Candle in the Dark (London: Printed for Robert Ibbiton, 1655), 56.

22.Robin Clifton, "The Popular Fear of Catholics During the English Revolution." Past and Present 52 (1971): 23-55.

23.Ady, 138.

24.R. J. Acheson, Radical Puritans in England 1550-1660, Seminar Studies in History (London: Longman, 1990), 45.

25.Davies, 73. Davies argues that there is a general rule that can be applied to the royalist and Puritan churches, the Royalist church didn't accept the belief in witches while the Puritan church did.

26.David Underdown, Revel, Riot, and Rebellion. Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 41.

27.Ibid., 73. The contemporary quoted by Underdown was Aubrey.

28.William Haller, The Rise of Puritanism. The Way to the New Jerusalem as Set forth in Pulpit and Press From Thomas Cartwright to John Lilburne and John Milton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 52.

29.Brian Manning, "Religion and Politics: the godly People" in Brian Manning ed., Politics, Religion and The English Civil War (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 82-123; Underdown Revel, Riot, and Rebellion. Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660, 3, 42.

30.A True and Exact Relation of the Severall Informations, Examinations, and Confessions of the Late Witches, Arraigned & Executed in the County of Essex... (London: Printed for Henry Overton, 1645), 19.

31.Haller, 64-5, 91; Robbins, 382; Davies, 49-52.

32.Davies, 35.

33.Underdown Revel, Riot, and Rebellion. Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660, 41; On the state of debate regarding the definition of Puritanism see: Richard L. Greaves, "The Puritan-Nonconformist Tradition in England, 1560-1700: Historiographical Reflections", Albion 17 (1985): 449-486.

34.Haller, 8; Vergilius Ferm, A Protestant Dictionary (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1951), 214.

35.Haller, 83; Underdown Revel, Riot, and Rebellion. Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660, 41; William Hunt, The Puritan Moment. The Coming of Revolution in an English County, Harvard Historical Studies (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), x; John Morrill, "The Church in England, 1642-9" in John Morrill ed., Reactions to the English Civil War 1642-1649 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), 89.

36.Greaves, 451; Haller, 16.

37.Haller, 8-19; Acheson, 103, 46-56. He defines Presbyterianism as "A form of church government by presbyters or lay elders, adhering to various modified forms of Calvinism." Independents: this is a term applied to those Puritans who close to the end of the Civil War opposed Presbyterianism in favour of more radical beliefs which were part of the New Model Army.

38.Haller, 6-15, 173.

39.Ibid., 103.

40.Haller, 120.

41.Ibid., 27, 84, 99, 117.

42.For a criticism of the interpretation that Puritanism was an instrument of social control see: Margaret Spufford, "Puritanism and Social Control:" in Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson eds. Order and Disorder in Early Modern England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985): 41-58.

43.Underdown, Revel, Riot, and Rebellion. Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660, 41.

44.Acheson, 47; William Hunt, The Puritan Moment. The Coming of Revolution in an English County, Harvard Historical Studies (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), x.

45.Margaret Olofson Thickstun, Fictions of the Feminine: Puritan Doctrine and the Representation of Women (Ithaca: Cornell Univesity Press, 1988), 31.

46.Carol F. Karlsen, The Devil in the Shape of a Woman (New York: A Division of Random House, Inc., 1988), 1.

47.Ralph A. Houlbrooke, The English Family 1450-1700, Themes in British Social History, ed. J. Stevenson (London: Longman, 1984), 96; Karlsen, 180.

48.Houlbrooke, 96-7; Haller, 121.

49.Ibid., 97.

50.Susan Dwyer Amussen, An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England (Oxford: 1988), 1.

51.Karlsen, 164.

52.Ibid., 196.

53.Patricia Mary Higgins, "Women in the English Civil War" MA Thesis (Manchester, 1965), 70, 81-108. In her research of women sectaries during the civil war, Patricia Higgins found references being made about such women in Essex, Suffolk, Kent, Cambridgeshire, Isle of Ely, Huntingdonshire which as we remember were areas where witches were persecuted. Another salient characteristic of these sects was that a large number of their members were women of low social standing.

54.Antonia Fraser, The Weaker Vessel (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), 244.

55.Ethyn Morgan Williams, "Women Preachers in the Civil War", Journal of Modern History (1929): 561.

56.Phyllis Mack, "Women as Prophets During the English Civil War", Feminist Studies 8 (1982): 24.

57.Higgins, 81.

58.Williams, 562.

59.Higgins, 84-5.

60.Ibid., 86-9.

61.Ibid., 97.

62.Mack, 24-5. Most of the female prophets were longstanding members of the Quaker church.

63.Higgins, 101.

64.Higgins, 101; Mack, 32.

65.Mack, 32.

66.Higgins, 90, 105, 107.

67.Reay, 26.

68.Richard L. Greaves ed., Triumph over Silence: Women in Protestant History (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985), 78; Higgins, 225.

69.Higgins, 277.

70.Higgins, 55-78.

71.Keith Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects", Past and Present (1958): 42-62; McGregor, 48.

72.McGregor, 48.

73.Farmer, 87.

74.Higgins, 216.

75.Higgins, 218.

76.Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985; reprint, Maurice Temple smith, 1972), 311-2.

77.Higgins, 228.

78.Ibid., 231.

79.Reay, 59.

80.Gerome Friedman, Blasphemy, Immorality, and Anarchy: The Ranters and the English Revolution (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1987), 254.

81.Ibid., 310.

82.Hill, 189.

83.Ibid., 192, 244.

84.Farmer, 29.

85.Hill, 215.

86.Ibid., 229.

87.Ibid., 229.

88.Reay, 58.

89.Hill, 245.

90.Ibid., 189.

91.Ibid., 15.

92.Ibid., 15.

93.Stearne, 18.

94.Stearne, 44.

95.Ibid., 45.

96.Ibid., 46.

97.A True and Exact Relation..., 28.

98.Ibid., 27.

99.Ibid., 15.

100."Strange and Wonderful News of a Woman which Lived Neer unto the Famous City of London, who Had her Head Torn off from her Body by the Divell..." in Hyder E. Rollins, Cavalier and Puritan (New York: The New York University Press, 1913), 378.

101.The Examination, Confession, Triall, and Execution of Joane Williford, Joan Canden, and Jane Hott: Who were Executed at Feversham in Kent... (London Printed for Y.G., 1645), 2.

CHAPTER 4

WITCHCRAFT AND POLITICS

Two historians of English witchcraft Trevor-Davies and Annabel Gregory believe that the political factor is important enough to be used as a tool to explain the accusations made against witches. Davies argues somewhat excessively that the controversy over witchcraft was responsible for causing the English Civil War. Charles I attempted to extinguish the witch-mania by appointing bishops and judges who discouraged the persecution of witches. His protection of witches roused the indignation of those who wanted to persecute them namely the Puritan Parliamentarians. That it was Parliamentarians who were the witch persecutors is supported by two observations. First, witch trials were carried out mainly in areas that were taken over by Parliamentary forces and furthermore whenever the

Parliamentary forces invaded and took over new regions from the King, there quickly followed a series or witchcraft accusations. Second, Davies examined members of the Long Parliament and showed many of them to be deeply concerned or sometimes even directly involved with witch trials. Discontented with Charles's soft policy towards witches, the supporters of Parliament took up arms against the King, a civil war ensued which resulted in his fall and the rise of Cromwell. Although Davies's overall argument is not well supported by the evidence some parts of it make sense.[1]

The importance of the political factor in explaining witchcraft accusations in England has also been taken up by Annabel Gregory in her article on witchcraft in early seventeenth century Rye. She argues along the lines of the social-control model proposed by Christina Larner. Larner's argument is that in an era of increasing political centralization, witchcraft accusations served the function of imposing order and legitimizing new regimes. An accusation of witchcraft in the port town of Rye, which lies on the border of Sussex and Kent, was made against Anne Taylor, the daughter of a previous mayor, a butcher by occupation. To explain the significant role that politics played in this accusation, Gregory reduces the accusation made against Anne to a single episode arising from a series of long-standing conflicts between two competing factions in that town. The two factions were the "brewers'" faction and the "butchers'" faction. The economic changes in the town, such as the trade slump mainly affected the butchers' faction by reducing their economic standing in the town. Consequently, the butchers' faction also suffered a political

decline while the other, the brewers' faction and its allies were rising politically and in addition they experienced growing wealth and prosperity. Because the witch accusers came from the brewers' faction Gregory argues that they were motivated by political ambition. Witchcraft accusations served as the means of legitimizing those aspiring to political authority and was an appropriate tactic for suppressing political opposition in Rye. The dominant brewers' faction accused persons from the butchers' faction of witchcraft mostly to show that they now were in control.[2]

In this chapter we will be arguing that the political factor was indeed significant in witch trials that took place in England between 1640 and 1660. Our thesis is that witches were persecuted mainly by people who during the civil wars and Commonwealth sided with the Parliament many of the victims of witchcraft accusations being persons whose political views and actions were perceived as threatening to authority or treasonable. Victims were persecuted not only to keep order but to legitimize the power of Parliament.

A Few Examples of Witch Trials Involving Politics

The contention that the political factor is an important explanatory tool of witch trials in England which took place between 1640 and 1660 is suggested by two observations. First, we notice a small number of cases in which the witch's political

views or activities played a crucial part in determining whether she was held to be guilty or innocent of witchcraft. And, secondly, the prejudice and propaganda disseminated by Parliament supporters asserted that their enemies, Royalists, were assisted in the civil war by the devil, and this, therefore implied that they were assisted by witches who were the devil's instruments. By politics we refer to people's "...relationships with those in positions of governing authority and influence."[3]

A pamphleteer writing about witches in 1645, described the state of the Kingdom as being split between King and Parliament. Because the King was separated from Parliament and would not work towards some kind of a compromise, the nation was grievously troubled by bloody wars. This, the author argued, was the Lord's punishment partially for the wickedness of the witches who with the assistance of the devil were the cause of these mischiefs in the Kingdom.[4] Furthermore, the author asserted that "[i]t is likewise certified by many of good quality and worth that at the last Assises in Norfolke there were 40 witches arraigned for their lives, and 20. executed: and that they have done very much harme in the Countrey, and have prophesied of the downfall of the King and his Army, and that Prince Robert shall be no longer shot-free: with many strange and unheard of things that shall come to passe."[5] This passage confirms that women persecuted for witchcraft openly expressed their political views and also that witches used their magic to help soldiers win the war by trying to make them for example, shot-free or invulnerable to bullets.

Thomas Ady, who opposed the persecution of witches, cited the following information in his A Candle in the Dark, (1655): "I heard a Suffolk Minister ... affirm, that one of the poor women that was hanged for a Witch at Berry send her Imps into the Army to kill the Parliaments Soldiers and another sent her Imps into the Army to kill the Kings Soldiers...and this Minister did verily affirm that those things were true, for the Witches (said he) confessed those things."[6]

Another case, was an incident involving the witch of Newbury about the time of the First Battle of Newbury (20 September, 1643). An old woman was trying to cross the river Kennet on a raft when she was perceived by the soldiers who, accustomed to seeing witches being swum, thought that she too was a witch. The soldiers seized her and by the command given by officers she was to be put to death. But killing a witch proved far from an easy task. After many unsuccessful attempts, however, the soldiers finally succeeded thanks to one artful soldier who remembered that "drawing bloud from forth the veines that crosse the temples of the head, it would prevail against the strongest sorcery, and quell the force of Witchcraft ...".[7] Before she died the witch pronounced the prophetic words that the Earl of Essex was going to win the battle. This story was confirmed in the newspaper Mercurius Civicus (21-28, September, 1643). The author of this report argued that the witch was sent from Royalist headquarters, his source of information being that the witch was spotted earlier as she was one of the royal camp followers. She not only foretold that Essex would win the battle but it was conjectured she was sent by the Royalist

forces who used the witch in this case to blow up Essex's powder magazines.[8]

Women who openly aired their political views were not accepted by contemporary society. One such mother of unknown name, who dwelled in Kirkham, gave birth to a monster after venturing her opinion. She, an anonymous pamphleteer noted, used to curse the Roundheads and revile the Parliament. She believed that the King and the bishops were right while the Parliamentarians, Puritans and Independents deserved to be hanged. She further said that the King was right to be against them.[9] In the case of Joyce Dovey of Bewdley near Worcester, who was accused of witchcraft on account of being possessed by the devil, the Captain of a regiment and several soldiers took an interest in her case and came to see her. They could not help but instead she managed to scare them off because of the tremendous power of the devil.[10]

The other evidence we have is indirect, coming from a tiny sample of newspapers printed by those who sided with Parliament. The authors of these newspapers argued that among the many enemies of Parliament were rebels and heretics who practised treason and betrayed men and towns. To support these claims the newspapers pointed to the example of Nottingham, where the agents of the devil attempted to betray the place by masking themselves in order to kill the sentry and then allow the enemies inside.[11] The enemies of Parliament were often portrayed by contemporary newsbooks as having the assistance of the devil.[12] This is to be

seen in another pamphlet which tells the story of a worsted-comber's son from Devon, who instead of entering into the service of a master secretly departed to join the King's army. He belonged to the brigade which defeated the Cavaliers at Langport-Moore. It turned out that this boy had been the apprentice of the devil.[13] Both sides used propaganda during the Civil Wars, the rival stereotypes used throughout the war were "... the swaggering, tyrannical, popish, plundering Cavalier and the carting, divisive, and socially subversive Roundhead ...".[14] In addition, Parliamentary supporters appear also to have had a tendency to demonize their enemies.

Political Views of Persecutors

In this section we want to establish the identity of the political orientations of the witch accusers. The evidence to support the thesis that they were on the Parliamentary side comes from geography and social rank. The social class of Parliamentary supporters corresponds with those of the witch accusers. As well the regions where witches were persecuted correspond to areas of Parliamentary control.

Between 1640 and 1660 the Kingdom was politically divided between the King and Parliament and in a state of civil war. By 1645 Parliament was victorious in the

Civil War, the Royalists were defeated and the King overthrown. The triumph of the Parliament in the Civil Wars culminated in the execution of Charles I in 1649, followed by the Rump Parliament which lasted from 1649-1653, culminating in the personal rule of Cromwell from 1653-1658. After his death the republic collapsed leading to the return of King Charles II in 1660.[15]

The political division of the country into two parties was characterized by noticeable geographic patterns in that, broadly speaking and with much oversimplification, parts like the north west were distinctly Royalist while the south east were solidly on the side of the Parliament.[16] Parliament controlled the towns of Bristol, London, Plymouth and Hull, the Home Counties, Midlands and East Anglia. The counties of Cambridge, Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk formed the Eastern Association which was the strongest Parliamentary organization.[17] This geographic pattern of civil war allegiance of north and west versus the south and east goes much deeper than that in support of our argument that witches were mostly persecuted in areas under the Parliamentarian control. In an earlier chapter we divided England between two farming regions the arable and pastoral discovering that witches were most often hunted down in the pastoral regions. This division also holds true for political allegiance. According to David Underdown, the most solidly Parliamentarian regions were the pasturelands, the dairying and cloth-making country.[18] The arable regions, on the other hand, displayed mildly royalist inclinations.[19]

Historians agree that those who supported Parliament came mostly from the middling and inferior gentry and the middle sort of men described as the yeomanry and substantial freeholders, skilled artisans and clothiers.[20] The adherents of the King consisted for the most part of the nobility and higher gentry.[21] The social standing of Parliament's adherents corresponds very closely with the social status of witch accusers that we have described in earlier chapters. Religion and politics were closely linked and it is true more often than not that those of Puritan inclinations tended to side with Parliament.[22] The similarities of social status between those who supported the Parliament's cause and those who persecuted witches is also related to religious issues. According to several historians, for whatever reasons, Puritans were more often than not Parliamentarians.[23] Although Parliament's support was not confined to people of this social rank or religious inclination only, still they formed the Parliaments stuanchest supporters.[24]

In the very beginning of this chapter we noted that Davies argued that the political factor was a useful instrument to explain witch trials in England. We have also argued that while his overall thesis is not supported by the evidence, certain parts of his arguments are tenable. One is Davies's thesis that the most vehement witch accusers were the Parliamentarians. He presents several arguments in support of this idea. Davies examined many members of the Long Parliament and found that they were deeply concerned about the prevalent problem of witchcraft.[25] Furthermore, whenever the Parliamentary forces moved into new regions, accusations

quickly erupted.[26] According to Davies, "the witch'scare kept in step with the victorious armies and spread over wide districts that had hitherto been spared."[27] For example, there had been only a few witchcraft accusation in Wiltshire prior to the arrival of roundheads. However, with the invasion of Parliamentary troops the persecutions of witches took deep root especially in Malmesbury, where after the appearance of the Parliamentary soldiers witchcraft accusations became very frequent.[28]

The thesis that witch trials were supported by the adherents of Parliament is further supported by some contemporaries who implied that the famous witch-hunter, Matthew Hopkins was commissioned to discover witches by the Parliament. Although this fact is disputed by some, Hutchinson quotes the author of Hudibras who wrote:

> Hath not this present Parliament a Ledger to the Devil sent, Fully empower'd to treat about Finding revolted Witches out? And has not he, within a Year, Hang'd Three score of them in one shire?[29]

Hutchinson also held that some contemporary observers who were highly offended by the unjust killing of poor old women carried their concerns to the Parliament only to find that in 1645 the Parliament was composed only of those who were willing to persecute witches.[30]

After the Parliament's victory, the new ruling groups had to consolidate their power.[31] The small shift in power from King's supporters to Parliament's supporters in several regions was not enough change for some political radicals such as the Levellers or Diggers.[32] The new regime was considered too conservative for them.[33] The new governing elites were faced with the problem of preserving themselves and protecting their ideals from riots that were inspired by lower-class political radicalism. They feared a new revolution from those who rioted in the enclosure movements in the fens, and against the tithes.[34] Parliamentarians were alarmed by disorder, fearing the consequences of treason and serious political disagreements, caused by those who were radical Parliamentarians and other adherents of alien democratic ideologies. Many disappointed contemporaries believed Parliament replaced one source of oppression with another because the new ruling group was just as anxious to maintain law and order. Parliament's victory was followed by a renewed assault on the unruly discipline of those who did not accept the new standards.[35] The civil war had also unleashed forces that were destructive of paternal authority in the family and if the family was threatened so was the hierarchical authority in the state.[36] Specifically, there was also the fear that the patriarchal order was endangered by female resistance of male dominance.

The family was important because it served as the basis for political relationships and hierarchy. Family was the metaphor often used for the state where

"... the king was the father to his people, the father king in his household."[37] After the patriarchal order within families were patterned church and state government in the counties and villages.

"... [T]he most extended theoretical examination of the question of women's civic position was buried in the disputes over patriarchalism and divine right monarchy on the one hand and natural law and contract on the other .... In general ... men at the end of the 17th c on both sides of the argument accepted, ultimately, whatever their circumlocutions, the subordinate position of women in civil society and denied them political right."[38]

The image of the family in which the father was the head, the mother his inferior helper and the children his subordinates was of tremendous importance to political theory. Political thinkers used the family as being analogous to the state when putting forth their political theories. "A family is ... a little Commonwealth ... a school wherein the first principles and grounds of government and subjection are learned ... so we may say of inferiors that cannot be subject in a family; they will hardly be brought to yield such subjection as they ought in Church or Commonwealth."[39]

The image of this kind of family was used by political thinkers in support of patriarchy by which we mean divine-right absolutism.[40] Rulers used the

relationships within the family as the best example for political authority. The image of the family and specifically the relationships between family members served as the best example for order and authority within the state. So proper relationships in the family were important because they served as the basis for the relationship between the governed and governing. In the patriarchal theory of government the power of the father was used to typify the power of the king.[41] Two works on the political theory of patriarchalism suggest the point. One is Richard Mocket's God and the King. In this work Mocket used the relationship between children and father to show the relationship between King and the people he governed. Of major importance was the concept that people, like children, owed obedience to their King; and the King, like a father, had authority from God.[42] No one was born free, children were born subject to parents and everyone was born subject to the king. The other authority was Sir Robert Filmer, who wrote Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings. He too argued that no one was born free but subject to the King. Subjects cannot choose fathers nor King. The father has limitless authority as does the King. According to Filmer, the Parliament was created to provide the King with advice. So no sharing of power between the king and Parliament is necessary. They, Filmer and Mocket largely depended on the relationship between the father and children in support of their argument that the father and King had authority.[43]

Political thinkers who favoured contract theory preferred the relationship between husband and wife as analogy. One of the writers on contract theory was

Henry Porter. On the basis of a contract, he argued that a husband had obligations towards his wife and the king to his people.[44] Another writer Diggs wrote: "The consent of the woman makes such a man her hausband, so the consent of the people ... is now necessary to the making of kings ..."[45] In the second and late part of the 17th century John Locke wrote Two Treatises on Civil Government where he set out to show that the power of ruler is not comparable to that of father over his child, or husband over wife. He did away with familial language to show authority.[46] He argued that marriage was a voluntary contract, the role of parents and children was a contract based on nourishing. He was against divine-right absolutism. It is interesting to note that as the familist image and its importance to political theory diminished, so too did witch trials. A relationship between family and the position of women and witch trials seems to be present.

The image of the family created by contemporary writers where the pater familias headed the household based on the unequal partnership between wife and husband and where children were subject to their parents along with the servants was a powerful vision which contemporaries struggled to uphold. The head of the household was responsible for order in his household and in a larger sense for order within the village community. Thus, if the father was a responsible master problems with order should never arise in a village. When the master could not keep order the neighbours stepped in. People were continuously observed by their neighbours. Some misconduct perpetrated by women which threatened the family order included

being a cuckold or a scold. Being a scold disrupted order within and without the household. Women who beat their husbands and were unfaithful were controlled by charivari.[47] The scold represented the refusal of a woman to submit to her passive, meek, and quiet role. A scold also blatantly displayed her behaviour in public, which was unacceptable and was punished by the cucking stool.[48]

Political Views of Those Accused of Witchcraft

In this section we want to describe and explain the significance of the political activity in which women participated during the Civil War and Commonwealth. In a patriarchal society women were confined ordinarily to their family and household and barred from participating in the public sphere.[49] Women had no role to play in traditional elite political structures. This is not to say that they played no role in mainstream politics. Women's roles in politics were quasi-formal but since women were forbidden to openly participate in any overt political efforts whatsoever on their part had feminist overtones.[50]

Women who aired their political opinions publicly encountered opposition from those who were strongly against the new liberties women usurped by engaging in politics instead of taking care of their household - "a thing [they argued which is] much out fashion" these days.[51] When in the 1640's women did attempt political

action they were directed by the House of Commons to look after their own business which is housewifery; meaning that women should not meddle with state affairs but make themselves busy spinning and knitting.[52] Some newspapers made the following remarks about women's activities: "[i]t is fitter for you to be washing your dishes, and meddle with the wheele and distaffe."[53] In a petition from July 27, 1653 a member of the House of Commons asked women to go home because the House of Commons could not take cognizance of their petition; the petitioners being women, mostly wives, therefore they were not covered by the law.[54] Many mocked them: "[a]way with these women, cried the Duke of Lennox, adding sarcastically, We were best to have a Parliament of women."[55]

Despite opposition women asserted themselves politically attempting to justify their political mobilization and their goals. Women were courageous enough to petition the Parliament as they themselves argued "[b]ecause women are sharers in the common calamities that accompany both Church and Commonwealth ..."[56] It seems the women petitioners didnot really feel they were overstepping their boundaries because they shared in the calamities affecting England equally with men. Still some members of parliament found these impudent and clamorous women in this role strange. To this one female petitioner retorted: "Sir, that which is strange is not therefore unlawful, it was strange that you cut off the King's head, yet I suppose you will justifie it."[57]

The phenomena of women petitioners is documented for the period between 1642 and 1649. Women from the lower classes often described by contemporaries as ale-wives and fish wives presented petitions to the House of Commons on several issues that were of economic, religious and political importance.[58] On the economic side they were primarily concerned about the cessation and decay of trade.[59] When it came to the cause of the Church they petitioned for the abolition of bishops and the preservation of the reformed Protestant religion.[60] In terms of politics, when the civil war got underway women petitioned for peace, the return of their husbands and the return of the King.[61]

After 1643 records about women petitioners are talked of usually in relation to Leveller concerns. In 1649 women spent a lot of energy petitioning the House of Commons for the release of Leveller leaders: Lilburne, Overton, Prince and Walwyn.[62] These women also included other grievances in their petition concerning the decrease in trade, diminishing of employment opportunities, excessive taxation and the unjust law of imprisoning people for debt.[63] Women who participated in the Leveller movement fulfilled roles as mercuries, sympathizers and printers. For example, an old spinster by the name of Katherine Hadley was arrested and imprisoned for seven months because she distributed Lilburne's pamphlets.

The Leveller party attracted many women to the movement mainly because it taught that men and women were created equal and because the party championed

the rights of women and was able to achieve some legal reforms that made the lives of women better.[64] The political theories put forward by the Leveller party were viewed by hostile commentators as having dangerous consequences. The question of whether the Levellers advocated universal suffrage has not been resolved satisfactorily because among other reasons, there is no indication that Leveller women themselves asked for the franchise in their petitions or that they wanted equal political rights with men. However, there appears to be some evidence to argue that the Levellers were prepared to extend equal political rights to widows and servants.[65] Others argue that Levellers never advocated universal suffrage. What we can say for certain is that the Leveller party never advocated political parity with men for married women. Nevertheless, the use of women in political campaigns by the Levellers in the middle of seventeenth century led to partial political emancipation for some women at least, meaning single and widowed women.[66]

Not all women's political activities were peaceful. Women were active protestors against enclosures. A protest against enclosure usually involved a forceful entry on the enclosed area and the breaking down of fences or quicksets, followed by setting the cattle free to graze.[67] Some contemporaries certainly did realize the large role that women played in enclosure riots, Margaret Eurie for one, wrote to Sir Ralph Verney in 1642 in a letter "I wish you all to take heed of women, for this very vermin have pulled down an enclosure ...."[68] Some women physically attacked those whom they perceived as averse to peace such as some of the Roundheads.[69]

Besides physical violence they used impudent execrations to express their views.

Women participated actively in all areas touching the civil war extending from agitation to the actual fighting. Their roles were varied including constructing fortifications, keeping look-outs for fires, and throwing stones at the besiegers. Women also acted as fund-raisers, and spies and emissaries. Wives concealed their sex and enlisted in the army alongside their husbands.[70] In addition, women nursed the casualties of war.[71] Women also helped by contributing to the war treasury by donating their silver thimbles and bodkins in order to finance the armies.[72] During sieges women were known to carry ammunition and other provisions. But they got even closer to war than that performing what was usually considered to be man's work. For example, during the siege at Maidstone in 1648 women hurled missiles at the invaders, and Higgins also found instances of women acting as soldiers, spies, informers and couriers.[73]

Women were important in the process of disseminating tracts and news-sheets. Women who sold the newspapers on the streets of London were referred to as "mercuries".[74] Some clever women disguised themselves as beggars and thus were able to dodge hostile officials and at the same time sell censured newspapers.[75] But women were not only important in dispersing subversive literature they also printed it. For example Higgins mentions the story of Abigail Dexter whose husband owned a printing house. She confessed to the Lord Chief Justice that in the absence of her

husband she ordered the seditious book called King James's Judgement of a King and of a Tyrant printed because she didnot know the nature of the book. However, when she was further questioned she refused to provide the identity of its author an offence which resulted in Abigail's commitment to King's Bench.[76] Women also tried to influence the policies of Parliament through print or in person. For example, the self-styled prophetess, Mary Pope attempted to influence Parliament's policies on several occasions by writing letters advising them how to solve problems of the time. Eventually she argued in print against the King's execution urging soldiers to bring back the King.[77] Another prophetess Elizabeth Poole visited the Parliament in order to present her views. For example, Elizabeth Poole, argued in front of the Council of the Army, in December, 1648, and again in January, 1649, that they should not behead the king because "... the king is your Father and husband .... you are for the Lord's sake to honour his person .... And although this bond is broken on his part; You never heard that a wife might put away her husband, as he is the head of her body ..."[78] A parable about Elizabeth Poole described her as a "monstrous witch" who acted on behalf of Cromwell to convince the council to act according to his designs. Later doubts were cast on the divine origin of her visions.[79]

Women who took part in politics whether as petitioners or in fulfilment of various military roles were regarded by authorities as threatening the existing social and political order and were a sign of the breakdown of control.[80] Because in theory under the legal system married women could not be punished because they

were non-persons, some historians argue that they were used as tools by male agitators.[81] Amussen, for example, suggests that women participated in enclosure and food rioters because of their legal immunity, that is, the legal immunity of married women.[82] It was widely believed that women petitioners for peace did the dirty work for men of quality. The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer developed the fullest conspiracy theory of women's activities. It asserted that the "... Malignants' enlisted the women to cry for peace ..."[83] Women's violent behaviour could be used against them because if they were unruly their unruliness it was believed if unchecked would be even more threatening in the future. Some women showed themselves violent towards other persons. Such women always ran the risk that their outbursts would be interpreted as not due to the misery brought on by the war but as highly organized demonstrations on behalf of the Royalist cause and egged on by Royalists. Some widows and spinsters were indicted for residing in known Royalist quarters and for supplying one of the King's soldiers or supporters.[84] Women spoke seditious words against King and Parliament sometimes reinforced by seditious action. For example, a woman of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields was fined and imprisoned because she spoke these scandalous words against the Parliament "[t]he Parliament men are roundheaded rouges".[85] These rabid opinions were spoken by women in public frequently and they were interpreted in this case by the loyal subjects of Parliament as designed for the purpose of bringing hatred and contempt towards the Parliament and thus undermining its authority.

Conclusion

In this chapter we noted several cases where the political views or actions of the person accused of witchcraft seemed to be a decisive factor leading to denunciation and eventually hanging. These examples prove the importance of explaining witch trials by using as one tool of analysis and interpretation the political context. We have argued that the witch persecutors were for the most part for the cause of Parliament. Those who were in favour of Parliament rather than the King occupied areas in the south east and pasuterelands which as we remember were the areas where witch trials took place. Furthermore, the social status of the witch accusers fits very closely with the social status of the most committed of Parliament's supporters. Having described the political orientation of the accusers we described the importance of the patriarchal family to their political views. Then, we showed that some of the women persecuted for witchcraft took active role in the Civil Wars as petitioners and even combatants. Two forces were acting on the lives of women; one was a conservative force restricting the roles of women to the home, the other force was the reality of war which necessitated that women forget their feminine selves and take up men's work to help out in the war. Those who were courageous enough to express their political selves were charged with witchcraft and were punished as an example for other women as to what happens to women who usurped the public space of men.

Endnotes

1.R. Trevor Davies, Four Centuries of Witch-Beliefs. With Special Reference to the Great Rebellion (New York: Benjamin Bloom Inc., 1972), 1, 118-147.

2.Annabel Gregory, "Witchcraft, Politics and "Good Neighbourhood" in Early Seventeenth-Century Rye", Past and Present: 31-50.

3.Davies, 147.

4.Signes and Wonders from Heaven....Likewise a New Discovery of Witches in Stepney Parish. And How 20. Witches More were Executed in Suffolk this Last Assize.... (London: Printed by J.H., 1645): 1-2.

5.Ibid., 4.

6.Thomas Ady, A Candle in the Dark (London: Printed for Robert Ibbiton, 1655) Accessing Early English Books, text-fiche: 109.

7.A Most Certain, Strange, and True Discovery of a Witch. Being Taken by Some of the Parliament Forces as She was Standing on a Small Planck Board and Sayling on it over the River of Newbury... (Printed by J. Hammond, 1643): 7; Davies, 147-8.

8.Mercurius Civicus, September 21-28, 1643: 140.

9.Five Wonders Seene in England (London: Printed by J.C., 1646): 3-5.

10.A Strange and True Relation of a Young Woman Possest with the Devil. By Name Joyce Dovey, Dwelling at Bewdley Neer Worcester... (London: Imprinted for Tho. Vere, 1647): 1-9.

11.The Scottish Dove, February 23 - March 1, 1643, 155.

12.The Scottish Dove, March 1-8, 1643, 162.

13.A True and Strange Relation of a Boy, Who was Entertained by the Devil to be Servant to him... (London: Printed by J.H., 1645): 2.

14.Underdown, Revel, Riot, and Rebellion, 164.

15.Underdown, 208; E.N. Williams, The Penguin Dictionary of English and European History, 1485-1789, (London: Penguin Books, 1980), 92-94, 63-69, 108-114.

16.Underdown, Revel, Riot and Rebellion, 162.

17.David Smurthwaite, The Ordnance Survey Complete Guide to the Battlefields of Britain (London: Webb and Bower, 1989), 136-7.

18.Underdown, 167.

19.Underdown, 167.

20.David Underdown, Pride's Purge. Politics in the Puritan Revolution (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1971), 11-12, 170; Hill, 13, 155; G.E. Aylmer, Rebellion or Revolution? England from Civil War to Restoration (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 41; Manning, 112; Davies, 118.

21.Hill, 13.

22.Brigadier Peter Young and Richard Holmes, The English Civil War. A Military History of the Three Civil Wars 1642-1651 (London: Eyre Methuen, 1974), 28.

23.Brian Manning, "Religion and Politics: the Godly People" in Manning, Brian ed. Politics, Religion and the English Civil War (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 95.

24.Manning, 118.

25.Davies, 124.

26.Davies, 147.

27.Davies, 147.

28.Davies, 149.

29.Hutchinson, 86.

30.Hutchinson, 85.

31.Christopher Hill, Puritanism and Revolution, Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the 17th Century (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1986), 143.

32.Christopher Hill, "Heresy and Radical Politics: From Lollards to Leveller" in The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill, volume 2, (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), 90. "Levellers advocated political democracy, a republic with a widely extended franchise, abolition of the House of Lords, election of magistrates and judges, drastic legal and economic reforms. Diggers and others carried the Leveller emphasis on natural rights to Advocacy of a communist society."; Theodore Calvin Pease, The Leveller Movement, A Study in the History and Political Theory of the English Great Civil War (Gloucester: Peter

Smith, 1965), 301-325; Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, Radicals Ideas During the English Revolution (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972), 107-150.

33.J.P. Kenyon, Stuart England (London: Penguin Books, 1985), 179.

34.Hill, 192.

35.Underdown, 239.

36.Underdown, 211.

37.Susan Dwyer Amussen, An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England (Oxford, 1988), 1.

38.Schwoerer, 216.

39.Amussen, 37.

40.Amussen, 55.

41.Amussen, 55.

42.Amussen, 55.

43.Amussen, 56-7.

44.Amussen, 58.

45.Amussen, 60.

46.Amussen, 64.

47.R.E. Dobash and R.P. Dobash. "Community Response to Violence Against Wives: Charivari, Abstract Justice and Patriarchy" Social Problems 28 (1981): 563-81.

48.Amussen, 118-122.

49.Darline Gay Levy, Harriet Branson Applewhite and Mary Durham Johnson, Women in Revolutionary Paris 1789-1795 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979): 3-18, 309-313.

50.The term feminist is used by all of the historians I have used, who speak about the role of women in politics. For example, Ethyl Morgan William on page: 561 and 569, Lois G. Schwoerer on page: 217, Jane Abray on page: 43, and Joan Kelly uses it throughout her book. The defintion of feminism in the twentieth century, according to Professor Mary Kinnear had three components: one, that generally speaking men and women are equal; two, women are subordinate due to the structure of the society and socialization, and thirdly,

women work together consciously as a group. The term feminism with reference to the seventeenth century has a partial meaning. It means that these women were feminist because of their actions and what they said. But these women were not feminists in the modern sense of the word because they never demanded power or voting right for themselves.

51.Patricia Mary Higgins, "Women in the English Civil War", M.A. thesis, University of Manchester, 1965: 212-3.

52.Higgins, 256.

53.Higgins, 256.

54.Higgins, 260.

55.Fraser, 222.

56.Ellen McArthur, "Women Petitioners and the Long Parliament", English Historical Review XXIV (1909): 700.

57.McArthur, 707.

58.Higgins, 6, 9.

59.McArthur, 699.

60.McArthur, 702, 699.

61.McArthur, 700, 709.

62.Higgins, 171.

63.Higgins, 176, 182.

64.Higgins, 244.

65.Higgins, 249.

66.Higgins, 250.

67.Higgins, 141.

68.Higgins, 143.

69.Higgins, 162.

70.Antonia Fraser, The Weaker Vessel: Woman's Lot in Seventeenth-Century England (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), 181-5, 196.

71.Fraser, 201.

72.Ibid., 29.

73.Ibid., 42, 46.

74.Patricia Mary Higgins, "Women in the English civil War", MA Thesis (Manchester, 1965), 24.

75.Ibid., 24.

76.Ibid., 27.

77.Higgins, 135-6.

78.Amussen, 60.

79.Higgins, 137.

80.Buchanan Sharp, "Popular Protest in Seventeenth-Century", in Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century England, Barry Reay, ed. (London: Routledge, 1985), 286; In interpreting the role of women in the Civil War and politics we have sought the help of historians who wrote about women's roles in the French Revolution. Jane Abray, "Feminism in the French Revolution" American Historical Review 80 (1975): 43-62; Olwen Hufton, "Women in Revolution 1789-1796" Past and Present 53 (1971): 90-108.

81.Fraser, 229-230; Levy 310-311.

82.Amussen, 97; Natalie Zemon Davis, Society and Culture in Early Modern France (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), 124-151.

83.Higgins, 168.

84.Ibid., 111.

85.Ibid., 117.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis we have tried to show that those who persecuted witches were the middling and lower gentry, and the middling sort of people such as the yeomen. We have also shown that many of them were Puritans and that during the Civil War they tended to side with the Parliament rather than the King. As a group they upheld certain values about the rightful place of women in society and about social order. The orderly society they imagined was based upon the patriarchal image of the family; in such a family the father was the head and the mother his inferior partner with the children's status within this family barely above the rank of servants. The image of this type of family also served the purpose of keeping intact the hierarchical structure of society and the relations between the sexes.

The witches were women who came from the lower classes; all of them had one feature in common: for various reasons they did not fit the patriarchal image of

the family which was so necessary to uphold order. Many of them were spinsters - spinning made women economically somewhat self-reliant and therefore more independent, some were poor widows - women who were self-governing, others were wives of farm labourers - who were employed in direct relation to the market. During the civil war some of these women also participated in new kinds of religious and political roles. Some were members of radical civil war sects such as the Quakers or Ranters whose values were perceived as threatening to the Established Church and the family. There, some of the women were allowed to preach and prophecy. Others, wrote pamphlets discussing controversial religious issues. Still other women also expressed their political views by petitioning the Parliament, airing their political opinions in public or participating in the civil war by helping to build fortifications, raising funds or acting as spies. All these roles posed a threat to the patriarchal family and it was feared that they would have a rippling effect and bring into question the existing social order. When these women were defined as unruly and disorderly, the contemporaries did not use the term in the negative sense in which it is used today; when *they* called the witches unruly they also meant independent.

In conclusion let us recall that in the chapter on witchcraft and economy we relied on a dual typology of rural communities proposed by agricultural historians which emphasized the differences between arable farming regions and the pasture areas. We have argued that witches were mostly persecuted in the woodland and

pasture districts of the south east areas in England. In these areas Puritanism was strong and served the purpose of disciplining the unruly lower-classes. In these pastoral districts, lower-class women were noticeably more independent and disorderly. The pasture districts in the south east were in many ways similar to those in the north west, yet witches were not persecuted in the north west. In terms of future research, it would be interesting to do a comparative study of two rural communities based on pasture farming systems, one in the south east and the other in the north west, to help us understand more closely the reasons why witches were being persecuted.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Pamphlets

Ashton, John. The Devil in Britain and America. Ann Arbor: Gryphon Books, 1971: 234-257.

Bower, Edmond. Dr. Lamb Revived, or Witchcraft Condemn'd in Anne Bodenham... London: Printed for Richard Biest and John Place, 1653.

Davenport, J. The Witches of Huntingdon, Their Examinations and Confessions; Exactly Taken by his Majesties Justices of Peace for that County. Whereby Will Appeare How Craftily & Dangerously the Devill Tempteth & Seizeth on Poore Soules. London: Printed for Richard Glutterbuck, 1646.

The Examination, Confession, Triall, and Execution, of Joane Williford, Joan Cariden, and Jane Hott: Who were Executed at Faversham in Kent... 1645. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

Farnsworth, R. Witchcraft Cast Out from the Religious Seed and Israel of God and the Black Art. London: Printed for Giles Calvert, 1655.

Five Wonders Seene in England. London: Printed by J.C., 1646.

Gilpin, John. The Quakers Shaken: or a Fire-Brand Snach'd out of the Fire Being a Briefe Relation of Gods Wonderful Mercie Extended to John Gilpin.... London: Printed for Simon Waterson, 1653. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Heers, Doctor Henry. The Most True and Wonderfull Narration of Two Women Bewitched in Yorkshire... Printed for Tho. Vere and W. Gilbertson, 1658. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Hopkins, Matthew. The Discovery of Witches... London: Printed for R. Royston, 1645; reprint. With an introduction by David Ryan. Partizan Press, 1988.

The Lawes Against Witches, and Conjuration. And Some Brief Notes and Observations for the Discovery of Witches... London: Printed for R.W., 1645. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

A Most Certain, Strange, and True Discovery of a Witch. Being Taken by Some of the Parliament Forces, as She was Standing on a Small Planck Board and Sayling on it over theRiver Newbury... Printed by J. Hammond, 1643. Early

English Books. Microfilm.

A Prodigious and Tragicall History of the Arraignment, Tryall, Confession, and Condemnation of Six Witches at Maidstone, in Kent... London: Printed for Richard Harper, 1652. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

Signes and Wonders from Heaven...Likewise a New Discovery of Witches in Stepney Parish. And How 20. Witches More Were Executed in Suffolk this Last Assize... London: Printed by J.H., 1645. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

The Snare of the Devill Discovered: or, a True and Perfect Relation of Lydia the Wife of John Rogers House-Carpenter, Living in Greenbank... London: Printed for Edward Thomas, 1658. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

Stearne, John. A Confirmation and Discovery of Witch-Craft... London: Printed by William Wilson, 1648. Facsimile. Published by The rota at the University of Exeter, 1973.

Strange and Fearfull Newes from Plaisto. In the Parish of West-ham, Neere Bow, Foure Miles from London... London: Printed by J.H., 1645. Reprints of English Books, 1475-1700, ed. by Joseph Arnold Foster.

Strange and Terrible News from Cambridge. Being a True Relation of the Quakers Bewitching of Mary Philips... London: C. Brooks, 1659. Early English Books. Microfilm.

A Strange and true relation of a Young Woman Possest with the Devill. by Name Joyce Dovey, Dwelling at Bewdley Neer Worcester... London: Imprintef for Tho. Vere, 1647. Reprints of English Books, 1475-1700, ed. by Joseph Arnold Foster.

The Strange Witch at Greenwich, (Ghost, Spirit, or Hobgoblin) Haunting a Wench, Late Servant to a Mister, Suspected a Mutherer of his Late Wife... London: Printed by Thomas Harper, 1650. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

A True and Exact Relation of the Severall Informations, Examinations, and Confessions of the Late Witches, Arraigned & Executed in the Countey of Essex... London: Printed for Henry Overton Benj. Allen, 1645.

A True and Strange Relation of a Boy, Who Was Entertained by the Devil to be Servant to him... London: Printed by J.H., 1645. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

A True Relation of the Araignment of Eighteene Witches. That were Tried, Convicted, and Condemned, at a Sessions at St. Edmunds-bury in Suffolke...

London: Printed by J.H., 1645. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

The Tryall and Examination of Mrs. Joan Peterson, Before the Honorable Bench, at the Sessions House in the Old Bayley Yesterday for her Supposed Witchcraft... London: Printed for G. Horton, 1652. Reprints of English Books, 1475-1700, ed. by Joseph Arnold Foster.

The Witch of Wapping. Or an Exact and Perfect Relation, of the Life and Devilish Practices of Joan Peterson, that Dwelt in Spruce... London: Printed for Th. Spring, 1652. Reprints of English Books, 1475-1700, ed. by Joseph Arnold Foster.

Wonderfull News from the North. Or, a True Relation of the Sad and Grievous Torments, Inflicted upon the Bodies of Three Children of Mr. George Muschamp... London: Printed by T.H., 1650. Thomason Tracts. Microfilm.

Tracts:

Ady, Thomas. A Candle in the Dark. London: Printed for Rovert Ibbiton, 1655. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Baxter, Richard. The Certaintly of the Worlds of Spirits. London: C. Parkhust and J. Salsbury, 1691.

Browne, Sir Thomas. Browne's Religio Medici and Digby's Observations. 1643; reprint, at the Clarendon Press, 1909.

Clarke, S. A Mirrour or Looking-Glass Both for Saints and Sinners. London: Printed for Tho. Newberry, 1654. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Farmer, Ralph. The Great Mysteries of Godlinesse and Ungodlinesse. London: William Ballard, 1655. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Filmer, Robert. An Advertisement to Jury-Men of England, Touching Witches. London: Printed for Rich Royston, 1653. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Gardiner, Ralph. England's Grievance, Discovered in Relation to the Coal-Trade. 1655. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Gaule, John. Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcrafts. London: W. Wilson, 1646.

Harflete, Henry. Vox coelorum Predictions Defended. London: Printef for Mat Walbancke, 1646.

Hutchinson, Francis. An Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft with Observation upon Matters of Fact. London: R. Knaplock and D. Midwinter, 1720.

King James the First. Daemonologie and New From Scotland. 1597 and 1591; reprint, Edinburgh: University Press, 1966.

More, Henry. An Antidote Against Atheisme. London: Printed by Roger Daniel, 1653. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Osborn, Francis. A Miscellany of Sundry Essayes, Paradoxes, and Problematical Discourses, Letters and Characters. London: Printed by John Grismond, 1659.

Younge, R. The Cause and Cure of Ignorance. 1648. Early English Books. Microfilm.

Newspapers:

The Faithful Scout. September 9-16, 1653; July 15-22, 1653.

The Grand Politique Post. January 17-24, 1653.

Mercurius Civicus. September 21-28, 1643.

The Moderate Intelligencer. December 18, 1645; September 4, 1645.

A Perfect Account of the Daily Intelligence. April 24, 1655.

The Scottish dove. Febuary 23 - March 1, 1643; March 1-8, 1643.

Ballads:

"The Salisbury Assizes. Or the Reward of Witchcraft. Being a True Relation of One Mistris Bodnam Living in Fisherton..." 1653. in Rollins, Hyder E. Cavalier and Puritan. New York: The New York University Press 1913.

"Strange and Wonderfull News of a Woman which Lived Neer unto the Famous City of London, Who Had her Head Torn off form her Body by the Divell..." February, 1655. in Rollins, Hyder E. Cavalier and Puritan. New York: The New York University Press, 1913.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books:

Acheson, J. Radical Puritans in England 1550-1660. Seminar Studies in History. London: Longman, 1990.

Amussen, Susan Dwyer. An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Anderson, Perry. Lineages of the Absolutist State. Bristol: Western Printing Services Ltd., 1974.

Andreski, Stnislav. Syphilis, Puritanism and Witch Hunts. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989.

Anglo, Sydney. The Damned Art: Essays in the Literature of Witchcraft. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977.

Aylmer, G.E. Rebellion or Revolution? England 1640-1660. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Baroja, Julio Caro. The World of the Witches. The Nature of Human Society Series. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Bell, Rudolph M. Holy Anorexia. Epilogue by William N. Davis. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.

Boyer, Paul and Stephen Nissenbaum. Salem Possessed. The Social Origins of Witchcraft. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974.

Brindenthal, Renate and Claudia Koonz eds. Becoming Visible Women in European History. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977.

Burke, Peter. Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1978.

Cahn, Susan. Industry of Devotion. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.

Campbell, Henry Black. Black's Law Dictionary. Fifth edition. St. Paul Minn.: West Publishing, Co., 1979.

Cockburn, J.S. ed. Crime in England 1550-1800. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1977.

Cohen, S. Folk Devils and Moral Panics. London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1972.

Cohn, Norman. Europe's Inner Demons. An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt. The Columbus Centre Series. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975.

Coward, Barry. The Stuart Age. A History of England 1603-1714. London: Longman, 1980.

Davies, R. Trevor. Four Centuries of Witch-Beliefs. With Special Reference to the Great Rebellion. London, 1946; reprint, New York: Benjamin Bloom, Inc., 1972.

Davis, J.C. Fear, Myth and History: The Ranters and the Historians Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Davis, Natale Zemon. Society and Culture in Early Modern France. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965.

Deacon, Richard. Matthew Hopkins: Witch Finder General. London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1976.

Delumeau, Jean. Catholicism between Luther and Volataire. with an introduction by John Bossy and translated by Jeremy Moiser. London: Burns and Oates, 1977.

Dworkin, Andrea. Woman Hating. New York: Dulton, 1974.

Easlea, Brian. Witch-Hunting, Magic and the New Philosophy: An Introduction to Debates of the Scientific Revolution 1450-1750. Brighton: The Harvester Press, Ltd., 1980.

Ehrenreich, Barbara and Deirdre English. Witches, Midwives and Nurses a History of Women Healers. New York: Feminist Press, 1973.

Erkison, Kai T. Wayward Puritans. A Study in the Sociology of Deviance. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966.

Ewen, C. L'Estrange. Witch Hunting and Witch Trials. The Indictments for Witchcraft fromthe Records of 1373 Assizes Held for the Home Circuit A.D. 1559-1736. London: Kegan Paul, 1929; a facsimile reprint, London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1971.

Ewen, C. L'Estrange. Witchcraft and Demonianism. London: Heath Cranton Limited, 1933.

Ferm, Vergilius. A Protestant Dictionary. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1951.

Frank, Joseph. The Beginnings of the English Newspaper, 1620-1660. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961.

Fraser, Antonia. The Weaker Vessel. New York: Vinatage Books, 1985.

Friedman, Jerome. Blasphemy, Immorality and Anarchy: The Ranters and the Engish Revolution. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1987.

Gardiner, Tom. Broomstick over Essex Plymouth: Ian Henry Publications Ltd., 1981.

Greaves, Richard L. Triumph over Silence: Women in Protestant History. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen. The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft. New York: Facts on File, 1989.

Haller, William. The Rise of Puritanism. New York: Columbia University Press, 1938.

Hill, Christopher. Change and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century England. chapter 8. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Hill, Christopher. Puritanism and Revolution. London: Secker and Warburg, 1958.

Hill, Christopher. The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985; reprint, Maurice Temple Smith 1972.

Hill, C.P. Who's Who in History. volume 3. England 1603 to 1714. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965.

Hole, Christina. Witchcraft in England. London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1945.

Holmes, Ronald. Witchcraft in British History. London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1974.

Houlbrooke, Ralph A. The English Family 1450-1700. Themes in British Social History, ed. J. Stevenson. London: Longman, 1984.

Hunt, William. The Puritan Moment. The Coming of Revolution in an English County. Harvard Historical Studies. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.

Jong, Erica. Witches. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1981.

Kamen, H. The Iron Century. Social Change in Europe 1550-1660. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971.

Karlsen, Carol F. The Devil in the Shape of a Woman. New York: A Division of Random House, Inc., 1989.

Kelly, Joan. Women, History and Theory: The essays of Joan Kelly. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Kenyon, J.P. Stuart England. London: Penguin Books, 1985.

Kieckhefer, Richard. European Witch Trials: Their Foundation in Popular and Learned Cultlure, 1300-1500. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.

Kinnear, Mary. Daughters of Time. Women in Western Tradition. Ann Arbor: The Univeristy of Michigan Press, 1982.

Kittredge, George Lyman. Witchcraft in Old and New England. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929.

Klaits, Joseph. Servants of Satan. The Age of the Witch Hunts. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

Kors, Alan C. and Edward Peters. Witchcraft in Europe 1100-1700: A Documentary History. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

Kramer, Heinrich and James Sprenger. The Malleus Malefacarum. translated with an introduction by Reverend Montague Summers. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971, reprint, 1948.

Kriedte, Peter. Peasants, Landlords and Merchant Capitalists: Europe and the World Economy, 1500-1800. Warwickshire: Berg Publishers Ltd., 1983.

Ladurie, Emmanuel Le Roy. Jasmin's Witch. Translated by Brian Pearce. Worcester: Scolar Press, 1987.

Lamont, William M. Godly Rule. Politics and Religion, 1603-60. London: Macmillan St Martin's Press, 1969.

Larner, Christina. Enemies of God: The Witch-Hunt in Scotland. with a foreward by Norman Cohn. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1981.

Larner, Christina. Witchcraft, Religion: the Politics of Popular Belief. edited with a foreward by Alan Macfarlane. New York: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1984.

Laslett, Peter. The World We Have Lost. London: Methuen and Company Limited, 1965.

Lerner, Gerda. The Creation of Patriarchy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Levack, Brian P. The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe. London: Longman, 1987.

Levy, Darline Gay, Harriet Branson Applewhite and Mary Durham Johnson. Women in Revolutionary Paris 1789-1795. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979: 3-18, 309-313.

Macfarlane, Alan. Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970.

Maclean, Ian. The Renaissance Notion of Women. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

Marchant, C. The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution. San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1979. chapter 5.

Midelfort, H.C. Erik. Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany, 1562-1684: the Social and Intellectual Foundations. Stanford: Stanford Univesity Press, 1972.

Monter, E. William. European Witchcraft. Major Issues in History. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1969.

Monter, E. William. Witchcraft in France and Switzerland. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976.

Muchembled, Robert. Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France 1400-1750. trans. by Lydia Cochrane. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978.

McGregor, J.F. and B. Reay eds. Radical Religion in the English Revolution. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Notestein, Wallace. A History of Witchcraft in England From 1558 to 1718. New York: Russell and Russell, 1965.

Pease, Theodore Calvin. The Leveller Movement. A Study in the History and Political Theory of the English Great Civil War. Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1965. chapter 9.

Reay, Barry ed. Popular Culture in Seventeenth Century England. London: Routlege, 1985.

Reay, Barry. The Quakers and the English Revolution. Foreward by Christopher Hill. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985.

Richardson, Caroline Francis. English Preachers and Preaching 1640-1670. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1928.

Robbins, Rossell Hope. The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc. 1959.

Rowbotham, Sheila. Women, Resistance and Revolution. London: Allan Lane the Penguin Press, 1972. chapter 1.

Russell, Jeffrey Burton. Witchcraft in the Middle Ages. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972.

Scarre, Geoffrey. Witchcraft and Magic in 16th and 17th Century Europe Studies in European History. N.J.: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1987.

Scott, Joan Wallach. Gender and the Politics of History. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. chapter 2.

Scot, Reginald. The Discoverie of Witchcraft. Introduced by Hugh Ross Williamson. Arundel: Centaur Press, 1964.

Shapiro, Barbara J. Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. chapter 6.

Sharpe, J.A. Crime in Early Modern England 1550-1750. Themes in British History. London: Longman, 1984.

Slater, Miriam. Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: The Verneys of Claydon House. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984.

Smurthwaite, David. The Ordnance Survey Complete Guide to the Battlefields of Britain. London: Webb and Bower, 1989.

Spufford, Margaret. Contrasting Communities: English Villagers in the 16th and 17th centuries. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974.

Spufford, Margaret. Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and its Readership in 17th Century England

Starkey, Marion L. The Devil in Massachusetts. Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969.

Stone, Lawrence. The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1965.

Thickstun, Margaret Olofson. Fictions of the Feminine: Puritan Doctrine and the Representation of Women. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.

Thirsk, Joan ed. The Agrarian History of England and Wales. volume 5. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Thirsk, Joan. Agricultural Regions and Agrarian History in England, 1500-1750. Studies in Economic and Social History. Houndmills: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1987.

Thomas, Keith. Religion and the Decline of Magic. Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England. London: Widenfeld and Nicolson, 1971.

Tilly, Louise A. and Joan W. Scott. Women, Work and Family. New York: Holt, rinehart and Winston, 1978. chapters 1-3.

Tierney, Helen ed. Women's Studies Encyclopedia. volume 1. New York: Greenwood Press, 1989.

Trevor-Roper, Hugh Redwald. The European Witch-Craze of the 16th and 17th Centuries. Hrmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969.

Underdown, David. Pride's Purge. Politics in the Puritan Revolution. Oxford: At Clarendon Press, 1971.

Underdown, David. Revel, Riot, and Rebellion. Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Willims, E.N. The Penguin Dictionary of English and European History, 1485-1789. London: Penguin Books, 1980.

Wrightson, Keith and David Levine. Poverty and Piety in an English Village, Terling 1525-1700. New York: Academic Press, 1979.

Wrigley E.A. and R.S. Schofield. The Population History of England 1541-1871. A Reconstruction. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Young, Brigadier Peter and Richard Holmes. The English Civil War. A Military History of the Three Civil Wars 1642-1651. London: Eyre Methuen, 1974.

Articles:

Abray, Jane. "Feminism in the French Revolution", American Historical Review 80 (1975): 43-62.

Anderson, Alan and Raymond Gordon. "The Uniqueness of English Witchcraft: A Matter of Numbers", British Journal of Sociology 30 (1979): 359-361.

Anderson, Alan and Raymond Gordon. "Witchcraft and the Status of Women-The Case of England", British Journal of Sociology 29 (June, 1978): 171-184.

Aylmer, G.E. "Review Article. Did the Ranters Exist?" Past and Present 117(1987): 208-219.

Barstow, Anne Llewellyn. "On Studying Witchraft as Women's History. A Historiography of the European Witch Persecutions" Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion 4 (1988): 7-19.

Batho, Gordon. "The Peerage: A Declining Class?" in Joan Thirsk ed. The Agrarian History. volume 5.

Bennet, Judith M. "Review Essay. 'History that Stands Still": Women's work in the European Past" Feminist Dtudies 2 (1988): 269-283.

Ben-Yehuda, Nachman. "The European Witch Craze: Still a Sociologist's Perspective" American Journal of Sociology 88 (1983): 1275-1279.

Ben-Yehuda, Nachman. "The European Witch Craze of the 14th to 17th Centuries: A Sociologists's Perspective" American Journal of Sociology 86 (July, 1980)

Ben-Yehuda, Nachman. "Problems Inherent in Socio-Historical Approaches to the European Witch Craze" Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 20 (1981): 326-338.

Ben-Yehuda, Nachman. "The European Witch Craze of the 14th-17th Centuries - A Brief Overview" Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion: 330-332.

Camerlynck, Eliane. "Feminite et Sorcellerie chez les Theoriciens de la Demonologie a la Fin du Moyen Age: Etude du Malleus Maleficarum" Renaissance and Reformation 7(1983): 13-25.

Carlton, Charles. "The Widow's Tale: Male Myths and Female Reality in 16th and 17th Century England" Albion (1978): 119-129.

Clifton, Robin. "The Popular Fear of Catholics During the English Revolution" Past and Present 52 (1971): 23-55.

Collinson, Patrick. "The Role of Women in the English Reformation" Studies in Church History 2 (1965): 258-72.

Currie, E.P. "Crimes Without Criminals: Witchcraft and Its Control in Renaissance Europe" Law and Society Review 3 (1968): 7-32.

Dobash, R.E. and R.P. Dobash. "Community Response to Violence Against Wives: Charivari, Abstract Justice and Patriarchy" Social Problems 28 (1981): 563-81.

Estes, Leland L. " Incarnations of Evil: Changing Perspectives on the European Witch Craze" Clio 13 (1984): 133-147.

Everitt, Alan. "Farm Labourers" in Joan Thirsk ed. The Agrarian History. volume 5.

Garret, Clarke. "Women and Witches: Patterns of Analysis" Signes: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 3 (1977): 461-470.

Greaves, Richard L. "The Puritan-Nonconformist Tradition in England, 1560-1700: Historiographical Reflections" Albion 17 (1985): 449-486.

Gregory, Annabel. "Witchcraft, Politics and 'Good Neighbourhood' in Early Seventeenth-Century Rye" Past and Present (1992): 31-66.

Hess, Albert G. "Hunting Witches: A Survey of Some Recent Literature" Criminal Justice History (1982): 47-79.

Hill, Christopher. "Heresy and Radical Politics: From Lollards to Levellers" The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill. volume 2. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1986: 87-116.

Hobsbawm, E.J. "The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th Century" Past and Present (1953-58): 33-49, 44-63.

Holmes, Clive. "Popular Culture? Witches Magistrates, and Divines in Early Modern England" in Steven L. Kaplan ed. Understanding Popular Culture. Studies in the Social Sciences. Berlin: Mouton Publishers, 1984: 85-111.

Horsley, Richard. "Who Were the Witches? The Social Roles of the Accused in the

European Witch Trials" Journal of Interdisciplinary History 9 (Spring, 1979): 689-715.

Houb, Lois. "Who Were the Witches" Women of Power 16 (Spring, 1990): 59.

Hufton, Olwen. "Christine Larner and the Historiography of European Witchcraft" in History Workshop 21 (Spring, 1986): 166-171.

Hufton, Olwen. "Survey Articles: Women in History: I Early Modern Europe" Past and Present (1983): 125-141.

Geis, G. "Lord Hale, Witches and Rape" British Journal of Law and Society (1978): 26-44.

Greaves, Richard L. "The Roles of Women in Early English Nonconformity" Church History 52 (1983): 299-311.

Larner, Christina. "Witch Beliefs and Witch-Hunting in England and Scotland" History Today 31 (1981): 32-36.

Mack, Phyllis. "The History of Women in Early Modern Britain: a Review Article" Comperative Studies in Socilogy and History 28: 715-730.

Mack, Phyllis. "Women as Prophets During the English Civil War" Feminist Studies 8 (1982): 19-45.

Manning, Brian. "Religion and Politics: the Godly People" in Brian Manning ed. Politics, Religion and the English Civil War New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973.

Masek, Rosemary. "Women in an Age of Transition: 1485-1714" in Barbara Kanner ed. The Women of England Hamden: Archon Books, 1977: 138-182.

Matalene, Carolyn. "Women as Witches" International Journal of Women's Studies 1 (1978): 573-587.

Middleton, Chris. "Women's Labour and the Transition to Preindustrial Capitalism" in Lindsy Charles and Lorna Duffin eds. Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England London: Croom Helm, 1985: 181-207.

Midelfort, H.C. Erik. "Heartland of the Witch Craze: Central and Northern Europe" History Today 31 (1981): 27-31.

Monter, William. "The Historiography of Witchcraft. Progress and Prospects" Journal of Interdisciplinary History 2 (Spring, 1972): 435-451.

Monter, William. "The Pedestal and the Stake: Courtly Love and Witchcraft" in Bridenthal, R. and G. Koonz eds. Becoming Visible Boston, 1977.

Morrill, John. "The Church in England, 1642-9" in John Morrill ed. Reactions to the English Civil War 1642-1649. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982.

McArthur, Ellen. "Women Petitioners and the Long Parliament" English Historical Review 24 (1909): 698-709.

McLachlan, Hugh V. and J.K. Swales. "A Comment: Lord Hale, Witches and Rape" British Journal of Law and Society (1978): 251-261.

Notestein, W. "The English Woman, 1580 to 1650" in J.H. Plumb ed. Studies in Social History Longmans, 1955.

Pearl, Jonathan L. "French Catholic Demonologists and thier Enemies in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries" Church History 52 (1983): 457.

Roberts, Michael. "'Words they are Women, and Deeds They are Men': Images of Work and Gender in Early Modern England" in Lindsey Charles and Lorna Duffin eds. Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England London: Croom Helm, 1985: 122-180.

Schwoerer, Lois G. "Women and the Glorious Revolution" Albion 18 (1986): 195-218.

Sharp, Buchanan. "Popular Protest in Seventeenth-Century" in Barry Reay ed. Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century England London: routledge, 1985.

Slack, Paul A. "Vagrants and Vagrancy in England, 1598-1664" Economic History Review 27 (1974): 360-379.

Soman, Alfred. "The Parlement of Paris and the Great Witch Hunt 1565-1640" Sixteenth Century Journal 9 (1978): 31-44.

Spufford, Margaret. "Puritanism and Social Control" in Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson eds. Order and Disorder in Early Modern England Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Stone, Lawrence. "The Disenchantment of the World" The New York Book Review (Dec. 2, 1971). Microfilm.

Swales, J.K., McLachland and Hugh V. "Witchcraft and the Status of Women: a Comment" British Journal of Sociology 30 (September, 1979): 349-357.

Teall, John L. "Witchcraft and Calvinism in Elizabethan England" Journal of the History of Ideas 23 (1962): 21-36.

Thirsk, Joan. "Industries in the Countryside" in F.J. Fisher ed. Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor and Stuart England Cambridge: The University Press, 1961.

Thomas, Keith. "The Double Standard" Journal of the History of Ideas 20 (1959): 195-216.

Thomas, Keith. "Women and the Civil War Sects" Past and Present 13 (April, 1958): 42-62.

Walter, J. and K. Wrightson. "Dearth and the Social Order in Early-Modern England" Past and Present 71 (1976): 22-42.

Underdown, David. "The Taming of the Scold: the Enforcement of Patriarchal Authority in " in Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson eds. Order and Disorder in Early Modern England Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Williams, Ethyn Morgan. "Women Preachers in the Civil War" Journal of Modern History (1929): 561-569.

Wright, Sue. "'Churchmaids, Huswyfes and Hucksters'" The Employment of Women in Tudor and Stuart Salisbury" in Lindsey Charles and Lorna Duffin eds. Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England London: Croom Helm, 1985: 100-122.

Wrightson, Keith. "Two Concepts of Order: Justices, Constables and Jurymen in Seventeenth-Century England" in John Brewer and John Styles eds. A Ungovernable People New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980.

Wyntjes, Sherrin Marshall. "Women in the Reformation Era" in Bridenthal, R. and G. Koonz. Becoming Visible Boston, 1977.

Unpublished Works:

Berger, Helen A. "Witchcraft and the Domination of Women: The English Witch Trials Reconsidered" Ph. D. diss., New York University, 1983.

Higgins, Patricia Mary. "Women in the English Civil War". M.A. thesis, University of Manchester, 1965.

Pollock, Adrian. "Regions of Evil: A Geography of Witchcraft and Social Change in Early Modern England" Ph. D. diss., University of Michigan, 1977.